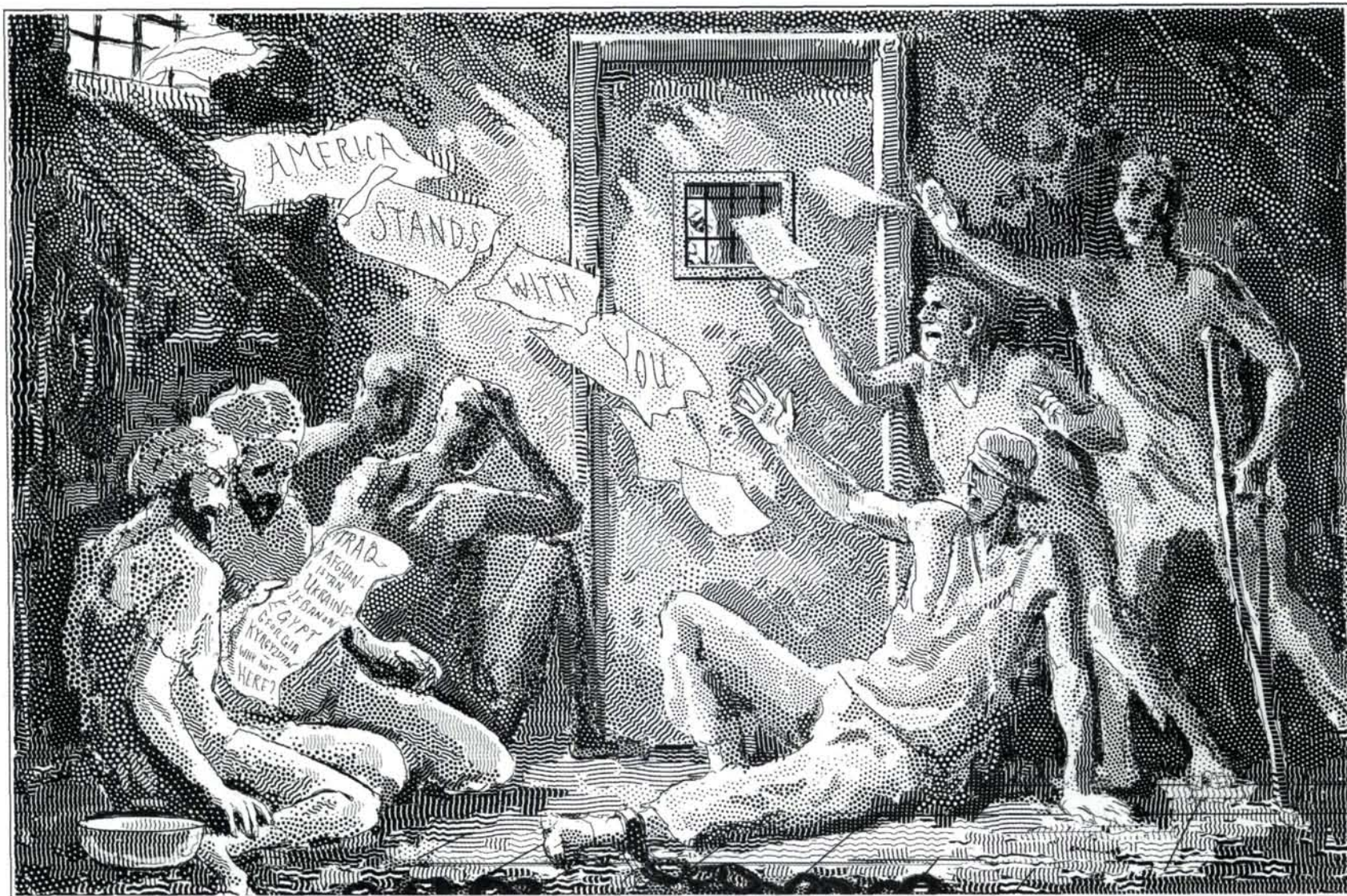


VOLUME V, NUMBER 2, SPRING 2005

CLAREMONT

REVIEW OF BOOKS

A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship



The Promise of Liberty

Gerard Alexander on Natan Sharansky's Case for Democracy



Peter S. Onuf, Hans L. Eicholz, Angelo M. Codevilla,
David J. Bobb, and John B. Kienker on American Historians

Eric R. Claeys, Nelson Lund, Stephen B. Presser, and Richard Samuelson on Law

Also:

Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr. on Stalin ♣ Conrad Black on FDR

William Voegeli: Social Security ♣ Clifford Orwin: The Straussians

Bradley C.S. Watson: Same-Sex "Marriage" ♣ Christine Rosen: Sex Differences

Jonathan V. Last on Jimmy Carter ♣ Thomas Meaney on Jorge Luis Borges

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BURSTING THE CHAINS

by Charles R. Kesler

ALL ROADS LEAD TO DEMOCRACY, OR SO IT SEEMS RECENTLY. BY routes direct and indirect, intended and unintended, democracy appears to be the goal of political change all over the world.

From Afghanistan to the Ukraine, these epic developments reveal the truth in President George W. Bush's defense of democracy as an outgrowth not merely of culture but of human nature. The "global appeal of liberty," as he called it in his Second Inaugural, springs from the fact that "freedom is the permanent hope of mankind...the longing of the soul." He said that "Americans, of all people, should never be surprised by the power of our ideals."

In June 1826, Thomas Jefferson, weeks away from death, recorded similar sentiments in his last letter. In words that echo down the ages, he reflected on the significance of the Declaration of Independence, whose 50th anniversary was approaching. "May it be to the world," he wrote, "what I believe it will be, (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all,) the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government."

As a "signal," the Declaration and its principles have been acknowledged from Poland to Tiananmen Square. In his own day, Jefferson thought the French Revolution a sequel to the American, and anticipated in France the speedy emergence of self-government, more or less along American lines. He was disappointed. For the rest of his long life, he was oddly, stubbornly incurious regarding the causes of the French debacle. It was not simply that "monkish ignorance and superstition" had proved too strong, after all. That did not explain Robespierre, or Napoleon. Somehow, as Burke predicted, the revolutionaries had forged new fetters for themselves out of their own passions.

In Iraq, to be sure, it is not the Iraqis themselves who burst their chains; the shackles have been struck off by the U.S. and its allies. This situation is awkward, for both us and them. The elections relieved the unease, at least for a while, because the voters' courage was a kind of self-liberation, a reason, at long last, for pride. Pride, in turn, allowed them to be more generous to the coalition forces, to thank them for making the election possible in the first place. For the extraordinary

level of security provided by our military helped to elicit the Iraqi voters' courage; and the very idea of peaceful, multiparty elections is, after all, a Western one.

Giving Saddam the purple finger was a memorable gesture of defiance. It was also a way of saying to their neighbors—and more importantly, to themselves—that the Iraqis were embarked together in the democratic ship; that they were one nation under Allah, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all, maybe even the Sunnis. As a gesture of solidarity, it was more hopeful than real, but at least it set a precedent. Several voters, proud of doing their duty, were caught on television, holding up two fingers, flashing rather uncertainly a V-for-Victory. Their hesitancy reflected, perhaps, that the symbol was too Western for comfort, but also the truth that the election, though a democratic victory, was a battle and not the war.

THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF DEMOCRACY SUGGESTS THAT THE "promise of liberty," in Bush's phrase, is capable of being felt by men and women in almost every culture. But it does not prove that culture is irrelevant. Many of the new democracies have some experience of personal freedom, a rising middle class, or the rule of law. Former Soviet-bloc countries teem with anti-Communists, the one article that Communism could produce reliably. And religion, particularly Catholicism, often both inspires and stabilizes democratic reform in the new regimes, in a manner that might have surprised Jefferson, who never imagined a pope like John Paul II.

The example of America itself is powerful beyond precedent—its economy, military might, political ideals, and popular culture. Though not an unmixed blessing, our example is the most obvious, yet unspoken, explanation of the accelerating democratic trend. Precisely for that reason, democracy's success in the new century depends still, as it has since the 18th century, on its perpetuation in our own republic more than on its expansion abroad.

President Bush is right to credit the great power of our ideals, but we must not forget their great demands, either. Thus even as we cheer the lengthening roster of democracies, we should wish for them, and for ourselves, the self-control that keeps liberty a blessing and not a curse.

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

SOVEREIGNTY AND TORTURE

In the past, I have learned a lot from Jeremy Rabkin, but having read his review of my book ("The Lesser Evil is Not Good Enough," Winter 2004), I begin to repent of my ecumenical spirit towards conservatives, since he really hasn't taken the trouble to read my book. Instead he has attacked a liberal scarecrow of his own devising. This attack begins with a major misquotation. He quotes me as saying that "no government may 'assume that the lives of [its] own citizens matter more than the lives of people in other countries.'" I believe no such thing. Like Rabkin, I believe that any state's primary responsibility after a terrorist attack is to protect its own citizens. The book makes it clear that a state should respond robustly while being answerable to the laws and institutions of its own country.

However, unlike Rabkin, I also believe that a society that has democratically ratified international agreements like the Torture Convention and the Geneva Convention is bound to comply with them. This obligation is not only the formal treaty obligation of any state that ratifies it, but is sustained by the moral idea, incarnated in human rights conventions, that U.S. policy has to accord basic moral respect to non-U.S. citizens. A state is entitled to balance its security obligations to its own citizens against these international obligations—i.e., to enter reservations explicitly limiting the application of these rules to its domestic practice—but only in a manner consistent with the plain meaning of these agreements. The Torture Convention bans torture. It is not a text to be parsed, by ingenious legal casuists, into a permission for coercive interrogations that cross the line, as in Abu Ghraib. When the U.S. starts believing—as conservative sovereigntists like Rabkin have assiduously encouraged it to believe—that it owes no one an account of how it treats non-nationals, it can find itself creating a global detention and interrogation policy which incurs global obloquy without adding an iota to the security of its own soldiers and citizens.

Michael Ignatieff
Harvard University

Jeremy Rabkin replies:

Prof. Ignatieff charges me with "a major misquotation." What I quoted in the review appears on page 7 of his book in a discussion of

international humanitarian law. Ignatieff says, "citizens of a democracy insist that what matters most in a terrorist emergency is the safety of the majority.... Those who think this are also likely to believe that international agreements, like the Geneva Conventions or the Torture Convention, should not limit what the United States can do in a war on terror." Ignatieff then says: "To take this position, however, is also to assume that the lives of your own citizens matter more than the lives of people in other countries. It is... to base policy on the premise that Americans come first." To which Ignatieff counters, "Those who disagree will usually be committed to the idea that a democracy's ethical commitments are universal and apply both to its own citizens and to its enemies."

Ignatieff endorses "the idea that a democracy's ethical commitments are universal." In his letter, he again endorses what his book presents as this premise's logical conclusion: foreign terrorists must be fully protected by the Geneva Convention and the Torture Convention. I think the U.S. Department of Justice was correct to conclude that the language of these international treaties does not prohibit what we have been doing in Guantánamo. Surely there is no question here of upholding a commitment we made to other parties in an international contract, since terrorists refuse to honor any aspect of these treaties. Why shouldn't we interpret our international obligations in ways that impose the least burden on our efforts to defend ourselves? Ignatieff's own protest makes clear that he thinks we have some obligation to international human rights law that takes precedence over our efforts to defend our own nation.

I don't see how our experience in Iraq really helps Ignatieff's argument, either. By ignoring international authorities, the United States was able to wield its sovereign power to rescue the people of Iraq from a monstrous tyranny.

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Those who champion universal guarantees of human rights never had any serious prospect of enforcing international standards in places like Saddam's Iraq. Given Iraq's progress toward democracy, it is those who heaped "global obloquy" on the United States—basically those historic champions of freedom, the Germans and the French—who ought to be rethinking their premises.

FRENCH PERFIDY?

John Zvesper claims that our book replaces the myth of Franco-American friendship with an "opposite-myth" of rivalry and antagonism ("Mythical Friends, Meet Mythical Enemies," Winter 2004). Yet this assertion leads Zvesper into his own exercise in caricature. He claims, for example, that we insist on "France's almost unrelieved moral squalor and political treachery." Although we admit that our book focuses on frictions, tensions, and outright acts of war, anyone who has read it knows that we have not neglected to describe periods of rapprochement. In fact, it is precisely those moments, albeit infrequent—France's aid at Yorktown, Nixon's attempts at détente with de Gaulle and Pompidou—that set the long history of French-American antagonism in such high relief. A forgetful Zvesper actually refers to our treatments of both these episodes later in his review.

Unable to provide salient historical examples that might weaken our basic premise, Zvesper makes much of the tangential and trivial. Our failure to lambaste Woodrow Wilson is evidence that "something is seriously amiss," apparently because he thinks the French position at Versailles served the interests of European peace. What really seems to gall this resident of southern France, however, is our belief in the frequent moral superiority of American foreign policy over that of his adopted country. Yet sadly, in order to even the score, he finds himself in the unfortunate situation of uttering absurdities, such as World War II "could have been prevented, most surely by a wise American approach to Europe after the First World War." This takes the "blame America first" school of opinion to a new extreme.

Zvesper's strangest contention of all, however, involves the American Civil War. We criticize France for installing a puppet emperor in Mexico in the 1860s and supporting secession. Zvesper insists that these moves might "have served the cause of human liberty by helping contain the slave power." Supporting the Confederate States



of America sure seems like a funny way of doing that. We choose Abe Lincoln over Napoleon III—just as we choose George Washington over Citizen Genet, John Adams over Talleyrand, Wilson over Clemenceau, FDR and Eisenhower over de Gaulle, Reagan over Mitterrand, and Bush over Chirac. If Claremont Fellow John Zvesper chooses differently, then something really is seriously amiss.

John J. Miller
National Review

Mark Molesky
Seton Hall University

John Zvesper replies:

I thank John Miller and Mark Molesky for their kind concern that I may have become politically deranged by living behind enemy lines. Yes, it's always a risk. But they have only to check my recent online writings to see that I have had no trouble articulating excellent reasons to support America over France, and Bush over Chirac.

Miller and Molesky pounce on what looks to them like a contradiction in my review (re-reading shows it isn't), but they say nothing to challenge my basic observation: although they (like previous historians) helpfully warn us that Franco-American solidarity is mainly mythical, they also overstate both French depravity and the continuity and pervasiveness of Franco-American cultural and political animosity. As has been noticed by other reviewers (including other American ones), *Our Oldest Enemy* is splendid polemics but flawed history.

I suggested the flaws might have arisen in part because "Miller and Molesky largely overlook the importance of regimes in politics," and therefore too rarely discriminate among the various regimes known over the centuries as "France." This point—to which they do not respond—is neither "tangential" nor "trivial." Sure, choosing between Napoleon III and Abraham Lincoln is a no-brainer. But my (thankfully) counterfactual supposition here—which Miller and Molesky do not mention—was that *the Confederacy had won its independence*. Then the relevant choice (for Lincoln, at least) would probably have become a less attractive one, between Napoleon III and Jefferson Davis. It does not take much brain to see an independent CSA and Mexico soon becoming rivals, and the USA and a French-Mexican regime becoming allies against an evil and expansionist CSA. The obvious purpose of this thought experiment was to show that regimes matter, by showing that America gone bad (the CSA) might not deserve good Americans' support, even against the France of Napoleon III.

HAMILTON AND MACHIAVELLI

Karl Walling takes me to task on two basic points ("Our Interest Guided by Our Justice," Winter 2004). One is that I present a "sanitized" version of Machiavelli. I believe too much has been made of Machiavelli the "teacher of evil" and self-conscious prophet of "modernity." The (mainly) political theorists who argue this focus on what Machiavelli wrote rather than what he did. My biographer's view of Machiavelli is shaped by the fact that he was an able and indefatigable servant of the Florentine Republic for most of its precarious existence and a patriot of the first rank. His teaching that the statesman, *when necessary*, must "be not good" to preserve the liberty of his country was the lesson of bitter experience.

Did Hamilton believe that the statesman, at times, must be able to be not good? I argue that he did. For example, his correspondence with Washington around the time of the "Newburgh conspiracy" in 1783 shows that he favored exploiting the threat of insubordination on the part of army officers as a tool to intimidate Congress into adopting measures to guarantee a reliable flow of revenue to the central government.

Hamilton's foreign policy for the young United States, I argue, can be summarized by the formula: peace through economic and military strength, and strength through peace. He also recognized that there were times when one must "molest" or be "molested." He was eager to seize the mouth of the Mississippi, lest French control of the area constitute a pistol pointed at the back of the United States. I think it is misleading to say (as my reviewer does) that Hamilton assumed that mankind's "natural state" was peace (recall *Federalist* Nos. 6, 7, 8). Hamilton assumed that the United States, like other ambitious commercial republics, would be involved in frequent wars (*Federalist* No. 34). His constitutional and financial ideas were inseparable from that belief.

Walling's second basic criticism is that, in questioning the intensity of his attachment to natural rights, I have "stripped Hamilton of any moral depth, and far worse, dismissed the fundamental principles on which the nation was founded." In fact, I don't say that natural rights principles were not at the heart of the American Founding, or that they have not influenced American foreign policy. My point is that the founders were not of one mind on the question and that Hamilton's mature position on natural rights was probably closer to Hume's (and implicitly Machiavelli's) than to Jefferson's and Locke's. A belief in natural rights did not strongly animate his foreign policy outlook. His opposition to the French Revolution in its radi-

cal phases arose less from concerns about the violation of natural rights than France's threat to the balance of power and its wanton call for the overthrow of duly constituted authority in Britain and elsewhere. Like the flesh and blood Machiavelli, the Hamilton who emerges from my book is a resourceful, tireless, and self-sacrificing worker on behalf of the prosperity and independence of his country, a tower of strength and a fount of ideas without whom the infant republic might not have survived.

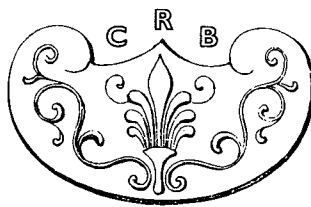
John L. Harper
The Bologna Center
Johns Hopkins University

Karl Walling replies:

With nary a word about the worst practices condoned (or encouraged) by Machiavelli in his writings, Prof. Harper focuses on Machiavelli's patriotism, thus taking a leaf from Machiavelli, who concluded *The Prince* with an exhortation to free Italy from the barbarians, as if anything done with a patriotic motive is justified. We should not be fooled. Patriotism cannot justify the crimes Machiavelli endorsed in the previous twenty-five chapters of his masterpiece.

Hamilton's judgment was not always sound. As he wrote to Washington, he did not believe the enlisted ranks would follow their officers in the Newburgh affair, so he was willing to exploit the illusion of mutiny in order to secure an impost, which he believed necessary to preserve the Union. This was perhaps the most questionable call of Hamilton's career, justified by balancing what he considered a greater against a lesser evil.

Hamilton never denied the Anti-Federalist claim that commerce and republican government might help promote peace within the Union or between America and the world; instead, he showed that Congress needed the power to regulate commerce so it could prevent trade wars from becoming shooting wars, thus making the liberal dream of peace through commercial republicanism more likely to succeed. Truth be told, he probably suspected Americans were too pacific rather than too warlike. Historically, war has been the natural state of man, but normatively, Americans have believed that peace is best, or natural in the way things ought to be, though producing this naturally desirable state requires what Hamilton and Harper suggest: a government and economy prepared for war, but disposed toward peace, whenever essential rights are not at stake. Hamilton may have learned to prepare for the worst from Hume and Machiavelli, but his aim to seek something better and more legitimate—government rooted in popular reflection and choice—owes more to Locke.



FREEDOM FIGHTER

Book Review by Gerard Alexander

The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror,
by Natan Sharansky with Ron Dermer. PublicAffairs, 336 pages, \$26.95

NATAN SHARANSKY HAS TAKEN ON two daunting challengers: the Soviet state and the Israeli voter. He has emerged bruised but proud from both encounters. Back in the USSR, he was a *refusnik*, a Soviet Jew who petitioned to emigrate to Israel but was refused, professionally marginalized, and persecuted. When he responded by becoming a leading spokesman for dissident Soviet Jews and a liaison to Westerners, he was accused of espionage and treason and sent into nine years of prison, isolation, and Gulag—events grippingly described in his prison memoir, *Fear No Evil* (1988). He was eventually released, and in Israel he became a leader and a parliamentary representative of the large, new Russian-Jewish immigrant community. In cabinets of both Left and Right, Sharansky has been a consistent hawk in a country under siege. Now, both he and his new book have been warmly received in America, including at George W. Bush's White House. From political prisoner in one country to cabinet minister in another and favorite of the president in a third, Sharansky has lived a remarkable, globalized life.

The Case for Democracy has two agendas. The first is to condemn one of the great moral failings of the past century and, still, of our time: the naïveté of many Western democrats in their dealings with dictatorships. Sharansky identifies two lapses in particular. Many Westerners mistakenly read the acquiescence of repressed people as evidence of their support or consent for their regime; these observers fail to appreciate that "freedom from tyranny is... universally desired." Second, even when they seek to

democratize, many Westerners conclude that the best way to undermine dictatorships is to reassure, rather than confront, their leaders. In *Fear No Evil*, Sharansky reserved particular disdain for Westerners who believed that most Soviet citizens supported their regime, and who advocated foreign aid, trade, and the military build-down of détente, which he believes strengthened rather than weakened the Soviet state. Now as an Israeli, he has contempt for the parallel belief that Palestinians are culturally suited for corrupt authoritarianism as well as the parallel strategy of offering concessions (as in the Oslo Accords) to radicals.

In both cases, Sharansky powerfully skewers those who cannot see that citizens of non-democratic regimes are afraid to denounce and resist; and he persuasively argues that raising the costs to such regimes is much the wiser path. On each count, Ronald Reagan emerges as a hero for his stand against what Sharansky once called the "kingdom of lies." Nowhere is Sharansky more compelling than in his call for the "moral clarity" needed to distinguish the democracies' generally minor transgressions from the far greater evils of our age. This first goal is the less famous part of this book, but not for want of trying: fully 40% of its text is devoted to the ins-and-outs of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over the past few years.

Sharansky's second and more celebrated goal is to argue not only that "all peoples desire to be free," but also that "freedom *anywhere* will make the world safer *everywhere*," and further that democracy can be successfully implanted in any setting. (He does not make the last claim ex-

plicitly, but his argument is meaningless without it.) He argues that non-democratic regimes inevitably inject insecurity into the international system. Because Sharansky believes that democracy pacifies the violent impulses of both individuals and regimes (though he never spells out why), he recommends placing democratization at the heart of national-security strategy. This explains why he thinks it logical—though some of his critics think it odd—that he champions a hard-line against radical Palestinian leaders while advocating more vigorously than do many on the Israeli Left a democratization of the Palestinian polity.

SHARANSKY'S IS A PLEA TO RECOGNIZE every peoples' equal moral claim to freedom and to honor the persistence of human yearnings for it. This is a noble and ennobling message. But—here I tread carefully because I honor both that message and the messenger—this argument simply cannot serve as the basis for America's foreign policy. At the heart of this book stand two claims that are empirical, not moral, in nature and that therefore must be held up to appropriate standards of evidence. They fail to meet those standards. Part of the problem is that, for his evidence, Sharansky relies on the two cases he knows best, Russia and the Palestinian territories. These prove to be highly unrepresentative.

His first empirical claim, that non-democracies always destabilize the international system, is based on two observations. First, democratic countries are unlikely to be attacked militarily by each other (the "democratic peace" thesis),



whereas non-democratic states are “inherently belligerent.” Second, “the breeding ground for terror is tyranny,” that is, the corruption and abuse inherent to non-democratic rule incubate the violent extremism that fuels groups like al-Qaeda. In this case, the problem with Egypt’s dictatorship is not that its government attacks the U.S. but that it produces Mohammed Atta, and others, who do.

The evidence for these claims is mixed at best. Research on the “democratic peace” is easily misunderstood. It shows, for example, that the U.S. has basically never gone to war against a democracy; but this does not suggest that it has waged war against all that many dictatorships. Wars may be *more* likely between democracies and non-democracies, but these wars aren’t especially likely, either. It is true that both the Soviet Union and Palestinian radicals—Sharansky’s focus—have highly aggressive agendas. But his claim that non-democratic regimes are “inherently” belligerent is difficult to square with the fact that most dictatorships do not manifest military designs on democratic countries. It is symbolic, in this respect, that America in the 20th century shared its two famously undefended borders with democratic Canada and authoritarian Mexico.

The evidence is even scarcer that non-democratic regimes inevitably generate extremism among their citizens. Some may have, such as Nicaragua and Iran in the 1970s and Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinian territories since the 1980s. But in Africa, Latin America, and East Asia, non-democratic regimes have not, as a general rule, generated violent extremism. Most of Western Europe’s historic dictatorships incubated more moderation than radicalism, which is why many of them evolved peacefully into today’s consolidated democracies. For that matter, well over a dozen substantially Muslim countries in Africa and Central Asia have so far not generated much extremism, despite durable authoritarian rule. Indeed, one of Sharansky’s core cases doesn’t support his claim: the USSR seems to have incubated apathy, not extremism.

This highlights a fundamental contradiction in the book. Sharansky argues that non-democratic regimes are doomed to see their citizens move increasingly in the direction of freedom. But a few pages away he argues that non-democratic regimes inevitably produce enraged and profoundly illiberal citizens who are easy fodder for radical recruiters. Which is it? If tyrannies produce not only Mohammed Attas but also Natan Sharanskys, then they must have effects far more complex than he suggests. To make matters worse, violent extremism has been bred, and sustained, in democratic Northern Ireland, and *jihadis* have found ready

recruits among Muslims who are lifelong residents and even citizens of democratic Britain, France, and Israel.

IRONICALLY, IF WE WANT MORE REASONS for skepticism on this subject, we need look no further than a 2003 *Commentary* article, “On Hating the Jews,” by Sharansky himself. In it, he admitted that once upon a time he believed that dictatorship was the incubator of anti-Semitism in the USSR “and that democracy was the way to cure it.... Today I know better,” he wrote, since democracy did not abolish anti-Semitism in Russia any more than in liberal Western Europe. Given the evidence, Sharansky was right to abandon his view that regime-type caused Jew-hatred; the evidence justifies extending the same correction to his thesis that dictatorships necessarily cause extreme hatred of the West.

Sharansky’s second major empirical claim is, basically, that democracy is feasible anywhere. Although he never says this outright, his chapter on democracy’s feasibility is entitled “Mission Possible”; he says repeatedly that “freedom truly is for everyone”; he assures readers that it can “acclimate itself in alien soil”; and he does not identify a single obstacle to its implantation in any country, at any time, other than an existing tyranny and its “true believers,” whom he considers to be a small minority that dwindles relentlessly with time. Sharansky eloquently condemns the moral and cultural relativism which suggest that “certain peoples are incapable of democratic self-rule or have no desire for it.” In contrast, he declares, “I am convinced that *all* peoples desire to be free.” He has a name for those who doubt this: “freedom’s skeptics.”

To stretch this moral stance to answer what are ultimately *empirical* questions about democratic feasibility is to advance an exceptionally thin case. He reaches his rhetorical height when he proclaims, on this note, “not only that all *people* are created equal but also that all *peoples* are created equal.” For his book to make sense, there must also be a hidden third clause to that sentence: he must also be saying that all historical situations are sufficient (equally sufficient?) for sustaining democratic decision-making processes over time.

It seems uncontroversial to respond that some conditions favor stable democracy and others disfavor it. After all, non-democratic regimes have been prevalent throughout human history and endure in many places, and *some* conditions must explain this, even if we join Sharansky in rejecting *ad hoc* cultural explanations. Yet he does not discuss a single factor that, for example, imperils the stability of democracy in a given country at a given time. He is said to have told President Bush that democratizing

Iraq is crucial, but will be difficult. But which conditions, exactly, make it difficult? He does not give us even an idea. Though such a question might sound pedantic, it is not: the answer is highly consequential. If certain conditions are inhospitable to democracy—for example, if government is so weak that it can’t effectively protect individual rights—then achieving stable democracy in a country where those conditions obtain will likely require substantially altering them. Such change might be easy, but it also might not be. It could be achievable through large-scale influence by Western countries, but it also might not be. And for the moment, we don’t even know which underlying conditions we’re supposed to be manipulating. The original neoconservatives would be the first to advise that trying to use government policy to achieve social transformation on that scale should be a project of considerable caution, study, and—even then—experimentation. It is not enough merely to issue a blanket call to *just do it, now!*

CONSIDER A PARALLEL. FOR DECADES BEFORE and after World War II, economic development experts and activists dismissed claims that any nation preferred poverty or was unsuited for economic growth and prosperity. They argued that Western countries should help spur growth through foreign aid, technology transfer, training, and so on. With time and bitter experience—and in keeping with the prescient warnings of such conservatives as Edward C. Banfield and P.T. Bauer—it became clear that neither wanting growth nor offering assistance was sufficient to cause growth, and that real growth required certain preconditions, such as the rule of law, which we do not know how to cause.

Sharansky is right to say that no country or culture should be assumed to be permanently non-democratic—any more, we might say, than any society should be written off as permanently poor. But it would also be right to say that not all situations are conducive to democracy, even as they are not all conducive to prosperity. This is not surprising, since both industrial economies and stable democracies are forms of order that rest on certain foundations. Pointing this out makes people neither “growth’s skeptics” nor “freedom’s skeptics.”

The peculiar way that Sharansky approaches democracy may explain how he avoids engaging these issues. In *The Case for Democracy*, he almost invariably discusses it in terms of personal liberties, especially the right of free speech. There are two problems with this. First, merely enforcing such liberties requires the presence of effective state structures. These are present in many contexts but elusive in many others, including Liberia, Sierra Leone, the former Zaire,

Afghanistan, and perhaps Iraq's "Sunni triangle." If stable democracy requires these structures, how might they come about where they are currently absent? Can the U.S. do much to help?

Second, democracy does not stop with these liberties. Free speech is usually what economists call a "non-rival" good: one person's use of it does not diminish its availability to others. But democracy also involves reaching political decisions, and when one party or coalition controls government, others are necessarily excluded, at least temporarily. Many democracies have produced decisions (such as expropriation) that so profoundly threaten the core values and interests of the current minority that the latter will support coups which protect some of its values (property) at the expense of others (civil liberties). This is roughly what happened in Spain in 1936, in Chile in 1973, and in Haiti in 1991. In each case, sizable segments of the population supported non-democratic regimes that they saw as the lesser of two evils. In such contexts, stable democracy is unlikely unless

these underlying conflicts are resolved. But how does such resolution happen? And what exactly should the U.S. do to help? The sobering fact is that social scientists really do not know.

Sharansky, like Joshua Muravchik and others before him, reminds us that dictatorial abuses remain a moral stain on our world and urges us to push at the limits of the currently feasible by setting our sights on the global expansion of democracy. It is surely true that there is no reason for Americans to be indifferent to regime-type when a democracy is within reach; there is every reason for us to want democratic reformers to become the future leaders of their countries; and there is little wisdom in America being identified with vicious dictatorships doomed to be overthrown. Then again, given the limits of our knowledge, it is also true that worldwide democratization is a project quite possibly of many generations and that, in the meantime, it calls for experimentation and pragmatic deal-cutting with dictatorships that we may well have to live with for a long time.

The good news is that U.S. policy since 9/11 looks a lot like that. Elections have been urged peacefully on several regimes, but force has been used against only two, and the Bush Administration has worked successfully with many dictators in the war on terror. We are pushing at many limits, but are feeling our way. A dictator of Mexico once explained his complex choices by saying that his country was so far from God, and so close to the United States. America's margins of maneuver are greater than ever before, and much greater than Porfirio Diaz's ever were, but we, like him, remain closer to the ugly realities of political variety than to the cosmopolitan ideal of harmony. The journey toward the latter is the noble task that Americans now confront. But nobility alone is still not a winning strategy.

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STRANGE CREATURES

Russia in Search of Itself, by James H. Billington.
Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 256 pages, \$24.95



FOR RUSSIA, THE LAST CENTURY WAS ONE bitter cruelty after another—the Tsar, war, revolution, famine, Stalin, war, Communism. Her people lived under totalitarianism for seven decades, longer than any one else. Something happens to a society under the total state. In time, fear, lies, denunciation, and arrest fray the bonds that hold a healthy society together. In Russia's case, these strains have left it much like an ocean: cold, vast, and swarming with strange creatures.

James Billington's *Russia in Search of Itself* is a wise reflection on Russia's destiny by a lifelong student. It has a somewhat uneven feel, as if it were written first as a series of essays. But Billington, who has served as the Librarian of Congress since 1987, is an eminent authority, and the insights found in his book transcend its faults.

Billington catalogues Russia's quest for the National Idea. "No nation," he says, "ever poured more intellectual energy into answering the question of national identity than Russia." Nor has the search ever been more urgent; an answer could mean salvation. But Russia's pursuit is schizophrenic. Its lost empires have spread both pious Orthodoxy and militant atheism. Since the Middle Ages, it has been divided into serfs and masters with little in between. And in the 1830s, it was divided again by the contest between Westernizers and Slavophiles—Turgenev looked West, Tolstoy East. The Soviets officially put that question on hold, but if you want to spark a dinner-table debate, ask Russians whether they belong to Asia or Europe.

Throughout her history, Russia's misfortune has been to watch mounting discord reach a breaking point, and then snap violently in one direction or the other. Billington observes that each time Russia has reconstituted itself—in 1861, with Alexander II's abolition of serfdom; in 1917, with the Bolshevik's seizure of the state;

and in 1991, with the USSR's dissolution—it has been swift, unexpected, and a self-declared break with the past.

Russia prides herself on a long and celebrated cultural tradition, but some of it is borrowed. Her early art and religion, for example, were appropriated from Byzantium. (In 988 C.E., Prince Vladimir I converted Russia to Orthodoxy; legend says he considered Islam, but it had a fatal shortcoming: no alcohol.) Peter the Great modeled his state on Sweden, his Baltic rival. During the Silver Age, Russia's nobility spoke French, bought Italian art, and, "most fatefully of all," says Billington, thought in German. And when Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II pushed Russia into the Industrial Revolution, their beau ideal was Germany, with whom they would war twice in the next 60 years.

Finally in 1991, Russia announced that it would adopt the markets and democracy of her Cold War adversary. Unfortunately, it didn't work out as many hoped. Privatization became a giant swindle in which well-positioned bureaucrats divvied up amongst themselves the vast Soviet carcass. Russians would vote, but active and participatory civic associations would never develop. Within a matter of years, power and wealth were once again highly concentrated. Former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin remarked, in superlative Russian fashion, "We wanted it to go better, but it turned out as always."

Since 1991, failure and uncertainty have opened the floodgates to a number of strange ideologies. Billington focuses on the most influential and dangerous school, the "Eurasianists," who combine nationalism with a foundation myth that places Russia back at the center of history. They intend to raise Russia from its knees so that it can once more face down the

West. Billington calls them the "troubadours of autocracy."

A.S. Panarin of the Russian Academy of Sciences, for example, calls for a "United States of Eurasia," in which Orthodox Christianity and Islam would form a popular front against Western secularism and individualism. Activist Alexander Dugin dreams of an anti-Atlantic axis of Berlin, Tokyo, and Tehran, each led by "charismatic theocrats." Politician Vladimir Zhirinovskiy threatens to restore Alaska to Russia and spread radioactive waste across Germany. (One of his campaign slogans was "A man for every woman and a cheap bottle of vodka for every man.") This January, he called on the Russian government to ban Jewish organizations, which, he explained, amount to "nothing less than Satanism."

Eurasianism is an eccentric and bigoted movement, but Billington insists on taking it seriously. Most Westerners, however, dismiss the clownish Zhirinovskiy. This would be a lot easier if he did not command Russia's third-largest party, which doubled its vote in the December 2003 elections. Dugin, for his part, directs Russia's burgeoning nationalist movement. Eurasianism boasts of disciples in the highest echelons of the Russian military and security services. The question of Russia is really the question of how authoritarian it will become.

FASCISM HAS ONCE AGAIN INVADED Russia, this time without the aid of an army. It seems inconceivable in the land that lost 20 million of its own to Nazism, yet walls in Moscow are defiled with swastikas. Skinheads carry out hundreds of attacks annually against minorities—one Moscow rights-group estimates skinhead ranks at 50,000—and the number of attacks rises by a third every year. Meanwhile, in Russia's parliament, a thriving

Red-Brown alliance unites those nostalgic for departed glory and order. Marxist theory was always an overlay, but nationalism is not. According to Billington, the appeal of the new xenophobia has yet to peak.

Russians once ruled half the world, and now their decrepit military watches as its nuclear submarines sink and its helicopters crash. Former "brotherly nations" like Poland and Lithuania are isolating Russia by joining the E.U. President Bush promises Ukraine entry into NATO should it stay on the democratic course, a prospect which appears to Russians the way Russia's stationing troops in Canada would appear to us. It's hardly just nationalists who are frustrated by a West that classifies them as a "developing" nation alongside former client states, and that allows Mongolia into the World Trade Organization, but not them.

IN A 1996 POLL OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES commissioned by Boris Yeltsin, three categories ended in a tie: democrats, Communist revanchists, and apoliticals. But one category beat them all: *nihilists*. Historically, Russia is the only country in which nihilism became an actual popular movement, and now, 150 years later, it has returned: Russian ballots feature the option "Against all." In a March presidential poll, it placed second.

Russia in Search of Itself argues that most Russians understand success as the product of either good luck or immorality. Eighty-four percent believe themselves unable to influence decision-making. Consider that the term *parliament* comes from the Old French *parlez*, to talk. The word for Russia's legislative body, on the other hand, the Duma, comes from *dumat*, to think: The politician's job is to think for the people, and the people's job is to accept it.

Billington worries that demagoguery will advance, not because of popular support, but because of popular indifference. Could a worrying *New York Times* headline, "Mounting Discontent in Russia Spills Into the Streets," thus represent progress? Perhaps the spirit that moved hundreds of thousands of orange-clad Ukrainians to contest their December elections will make its way to Russia. Street protests

might be the closest thing Russia has to an opposition.

For centuries, a Kremlin oligarchy, whether comprising Muscovite and Kievan princes, the Romanov court, or the General-Secretary's Politburo, has governed Russia. But this seems to have finally given way to a rough and imperfect liberty. This does not mean, of course, that thousand-year-old traditions disappear overnight, or for that matter, over a decade of nights. The tiny parasitic elite is back, this time in the form of the superrich "new Russians," and the *siloviki*, the super-bureaucrats. These groups, as Billington notes, are the chief obstacles to democratic change.

If you wish to understand the nature of arbitrary power in Russia, look no further than a little flashing blue light, the *migalka*. Available to elites with cash and connections, it confers on its owner the right to disregard any and all traffic laws. I've seen *migalka*-equipped Mercedes 600s and Land Rovers drive on sidewalks and fly through red lights at busy intersections.

During the Yeltsin era, a handful of "oligarchs" built financial-industrial clans that came to control nearly half the Russian GDP. Such a concentration of wealth, especially in the absence of reliable legal and financial institutions, distorts the growth of markets. Some estimate that this thievery has created a gap between rich and poor wider than the one that preceded the Revolution. By most indicators, Russia is now a Third World country, yet it is second only to the U.S. in its number of billionaires.

With the end of the Cold War, Russia lost half its industrial output. Each year, Russia's population declines by a stunning one million people. At this rate, by 2050 its population will have shrunk by a third. Male life expectancy is 58 and falling (it's 75 in the U.S.). One cause, according to a parliamentary report, is "stress generated by people's lack of confidence in their futures and those of their children." Another is alcoholism. The suicide rate between 1995 and 2000 was quadruple that of Europe. A sodden, depressed Russia can only be further eclipsed on the international stage.

President Vladimir Putin is working to

reverse this. In his mind, a good number of Russia's problems—poverty, terrorism, mafiosi, Chechnya—are the result of a weak and semi-dismantled state, and so he has set about rebuilding it. His soft authoritarianism, coupled with various tax, legal, and benefit reforms, has contributed to economic growth averaging 6.5% per year since 1998—though Russia's economy is still only slightly larger than that of Los Angeles County. Putin has also taught the country's most powerful men that they are nothing compared to his state. But if Russia is to democratize, the state cannot always win.

EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE HISTORIC Iraqi elections in January were a breakthrough. Fewer know that the first constitutional transfer of power in Russian history took place only in 2000, when Putin succeeded Yeltsin. Though Russia's democracy is in its adolescence, with all the immaturity and hesitancy typical of that difficult age, we often judge it by European standards. Russia is again trying to import institutions without the traditions that uphold them.

Remarkably, Russians see America as a country much like their own—large and multiethnic, unfurled across a continent. They also see the society—creative, open, tolerant, rich, and free—they wish for themselves. This gives Billington hope. But a fair prediction is that Russia's fate is unpredictable. In the course of the last century, Russia made an unlikely metamorphosis from the bastion of reactionary monarchism, to the exporter of world revolution, to a struggling, dysfunctional democracy.

But one thing is certain. Russia possesses one-third of the world's natural gas, 7% of its oil, one-fifth of its precious metals, endless forest and farmland, ports on seven seas, the world's second-largest nuclear stockpile, and 140 million patient and educated citizens—all spread across eleven time zones. This means that no matter how stormy its progress, Russia will matter. Like the ocean, the strength of a nation is a matter of ebb and flow.

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TYRANNY AND UTOPIA

Stalin: Court of the Red Tsar, by Simon Sebag Montefiore.
Alfred A. Knopf, 816 pages, \$30



You're an impossible man. It's impossible to live with you!

—Nadya Alliluyeva to her husband,
Joseph Stalin

SIMON SEBAG MONTEFIORE, A BRITISH journalist who has spent a quarter of his life wandering among the smoldering ruins of Soviet civilization, sets out to study the Soviet horrors in a new way. "My mission was to go beyond the traditional explanations of Stalin as 'enigma,' 'madman' or 'Satanic genius,' and that of his comrades as 'men without biographies,' dreary mustached sycophants...." He has written, instead, "a biography of his courtiers... a biography of Stalin himself through his relationships with his magnates." Accordingly, the book, which "does not pretend to be a history of [Stalin's] foreign and domestic policies," is dense with personal matters: old friendships, wives and children, the hobbies of the leaders, their quarrels, reconciliations, and adulteries, their food and clothes—the stuff of *People* magazine. Stalin and his Politburo pals, like the Kennedys, loved throwing people into the pool. As the great Hyppolite Taine remarks of Macaulay, Montefiore "never forgets the actual.... The petty details which he...selects fix the attention, and place the scene before our eyes.... These precise details...give to history the animation and life of a novel."

As part of a massive research effort, Montefiore has visited most of Stalin's homes, including his five vacation houses in Georgia's seceded and defiant Abkhaz province; he puts before us the settings for each historic conver-

sation or decision. He has used an incredibly wide range of sources—printed, archival, and living—though, like many post-Soviet writers, Montefiore seems largely ignorant of the rich tradition of Kremlinology. In a book chock full of sourced detail, the distance between footnotes often makes the source of a particular assertion difficult to identify, and sometimes assertions in the text seem to go beyond the evidence. One story, sourced to a Politburo child, differs from my own interview with the same subject. But Montefiore's overall angle of attack—his focus on the personal, on "gossip," on Stalin's "courtiers"—is needed and very promising.

In any regime based on personal authority, the personality and idiosyncrasies of the ruler, and also of his lieutenants, must have a great determining voice in political outcomes. Stalin, for example, had the power, and the warrant from Bolshevik doctrine, to censor and edit literature and music. If Stalin's "deeply conservative tastes remained nineteenth century even during the Modernist blossoming of the twenties," this fact played a great role in exacerbating the intellectuals' estrangement from the regime. With Stalin gone, Khrushchev's de-Stalinization gave the intellectuals hope, but his taste doomed the reconciliation when he reacted against the avant-garde Manezh art show. When Gorbachev eventually liberated the intellectuals, by *glasnost*, to criticize the regime, their accumulated resentment was enough to destroy its public legitimacy.

The ruler of a vast country who is the founder of a new regime—and Stalin, not Lenin, was the founder of the Soviet system that foundered in the '80s—can only consummate his titanic

labors by the actions of his chieftains, who leave the imprint of their personalities on the institutions of the regime and on history.

Could we understand the United States built by Washington if we knew Hamilton and Jefferson only as anonymous tools? In the Soviet case, the terror would not have extended so far without the neurotic instability of the tiny, bisexual Yezhov, People's Commissar of State Security, who "does not know how to stop." Hitler might have won the war if Stalin had not turned over war industry and domestic affairs to the businesslike bourgeois Giorgi Malenkov and to Lavrenty Beria. Montefiore says less about the colorless Malenkov, but rightly calls Beria a "gifted, intelligent, ruthless and tirelessly competent adventurer." He notes that Beria was "less devoted to Marxism as time went on," but Beria's daughter-in-law is probably more accurate in labeling him "never a real communist." Beria himself mused, shortly before Stalin's death, "The USSR can never succeed until we have private property." When watching his favorite Westerns, Beria "identified with the Mexican bandits," that is, with southern outsiders who can only get ahead by joining or plundering whatever side offers the best pickings. Without these personality traits and views, Beria would not have carried out his 1953 "bid for popularity by de-Bolshevizing the regime."

AFTER WORLD WAR II, STALIN RETREATED from public view, making few public statements but continuing to issue detailed secret instructions on important matters of public policy such as the torture of "mur-

derers in white coats," the Jewish doctors. The most prominent pronouncements Stalin did make were oracular works of Marxist "theory," *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics and Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.* Like Mao before the Cultural Revolution, Stalin sought the status of a theocrat who does not deign to govern in merely tactical matters, but allows his high priests and Levites to argue over the practical application of his sacred laws. Thus one leader and his team of followers could be made the fall guy for failed or superseded policy. Zhdanov and his followers became the scapegoats, in the "Leningrad Case," for the failed attempt to communize Western Europe through the local Communist parties and to make the radical, and independent, Yugoslav Communists a favored partner. Beria was to be the scapegoat, at the end of Stalin's life, for the prominence of Jews and non-Russians in the party from the revolution until the end of World War II. Perhaps Stalin learned from the disastrous friendship with Hitler, ended by the German surprise attack, never to step forward in public as responsible for risky policy.

This pattern of rule had another clever aspect. Stalin normally allowed the ascendant faction to exterminate the leaders of the superseded group, which in turn provided charges on which the ascendant group could be brought low, leaving Stalin in the position of supreme arbiter. *Kompromat* (material for accusation or blackmail) remained enormously important throughout the brief life of the Soviet regime, from Lenin's testament questioning Stalin's fitness to lead to Gorbachev's *glasnost*. Montefiore perceives that "the system encouraged Terror entrepreneurialism," but does not tease out these deeper techniques of Stalin's rule to the extent that Jonathan Brent and Vladimir Naumov did in *Stalin's Last Crime* (2003). In turning the focus away from policy, he fails to note how distinctive were the policy repertoires advocated by different "magnates." But if Montefiore had included more policy in his mix, it would only have strengthened the argument for his new focus on Stalin's "magnates."

Montefiore's approach leads him to question the convention by which most biographers of Stalin, Hitler, and their lieutenants have presented their actions as absurd or stupid, because the men themselves were evil. We like to think that they desolated the center of world civilization without any particular merits or talents. This view seems somehow instinctive. Perhaps it wells up from some primeval feeling of the oneness of what were once called virtues, and their rootedness, confirmed by thousands of years of moral teachings, in human strength or wholeness. But this instinct blocks inquiry into why the wicked titans of history did specif-

ic things, how they could achieve so much, and ultimately into why they were so evil.

AS THE SON OF A DRUNKEN, IMPROVIDENT shoemaker, without education, connections, or even being a Russian, Stalin eliminated more-favored rivals one by one, until he ended up in the seat of the glittering heirs of the Caesars. Before his throne was stable, he embarked on a campaign to tame and regiment most of those he ruled. No sooner had he broken the peasants than he faced the frenzied, annihilating onslaught of the country that had brought European civilization to its modern peak and perfection, Germany. And, at the head of the society and regime he had personally crafted in 15 years of hectic demolition and reconstruction, he somehow won the unequal contest. The Anglo-Saxons' contribution was modest. For the first time in modern total war, the more backward society prevailed against the more advanced. By valor, by discipline, by inventiveness, by sheer will, Stalin's Soviet Union emerged in unrivalled dominion of the European continent, and immediately challenged the island powers—as advanced in technology, but far wealthier than Germany—for global hegemony, an unequal fight sustained for 45 years. To do these things Stalin must have been a great man.

Montefiore does not say so in so many words, but his portrait represents a substantial reevaluation of Stalin: a reevaluation upwards.

Far from being the colourless bureaucratic mediocrity disdained by Trotsky, the real Stalin was an energetic and vainglorious melodramatist who was exceptional in every way.... The man inside was a super-intelligent and gifted politician for whom his own historic role was paramount, a nervy intellectual who manically read history and literature, and a fidgety hypochondriac.... While incapable of true empathy on the one hand, he was a master of friendships on the other.... When he set his mind on charming a man, he was irresistible.

Montefiore rightly identifies Stalin's "dry wit." Stalin "was an intellectual, despite being the son of a cobbler and a washerwoman. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that Stalin was the best-read ruler of Russia from Catherine the Great up to Vladimir Putin." In breadth of knowledge, indeed, he compared well with most world leaders of modern times:

Before he set off for [vacation] he scrawled to Poskrebyshv [his secretary]: "Order all these books. Stalin. *Goethe's Letters*,

Poetry of the French Revolution, Pushkin, Konstantin Simonov, Shakespeare, Herzen, *History of the Seven Years War*—and *Battle at Sea 1939-1945* by Peter Scott."

Beach towel reading! In writing, Stalin had "the ability to reduce complex problems to lucid simplicity."

Montefiore's presentation of Stalin differs from earlier ones in two particular ways. First, we do not see an austere, but a sexually indulgent Stalin amid a debauched and drunken Bolshevik elite. Not only Beria, but Kalinin, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Vlasik, Voroshilov, Yagoda, Yenukidze, and Yezhov could be described as tireless womanizers, while Lenin and many others took advantage of their secretaries or other women. Yezhov's wife was a manic seducer of writers, most of whom were doomed by her whimsies. This picture calls into question the contrast between ancient tyranny and modern ideological tyranny that seems otherwise plausible.

Second, in contrast to most writers on Stalin, Montefiore emphasizes his Georgian qualities.

...His personal Russianness has been exaggerated. His lifestyle and mentality remained Georgian. He talked Georgian, ate Georgian, personally ruled Georgia...., becoming involved in parochial politics, missed his childhood friends, and spent almost half of his last eight years in his own isolated, fantasy Georgia.

I am more persuaded by Robert Conquest, who argues, in *Stalin: Breaker of Nations* (1991), that "His temperament was, by all usual standards, very unGeorgian," except for the mountaineer's "readiness for revenge." Stalin rarely saw his mother, even when vacationing in Georgia: most un-Georgian. His own children got the impression "he used to be a Georgian." He forbade speaking Georgian in the presence of Russians, and began to replace "proletarian internationalism" by Russian nationalism from the early '30s, as soon as he was dictator. One can see in this a clever adaptation to his role as the ruler of the former Russian empire, but it is probably more the trait called by psychoanalysts "identification with the adversary." Stalin preferred to identify with Russia, powerful and triumphant, rather than with passive and downtrodden Georgia. Any such impulses must have been powerfully encouraged by Marxism-Leninism's insistence that everything is a matter of power, and by its contempt for weakness and failure. Ultimately, we should see Stalin, like other members of small, dependent peoples, as responding to his sense of marginality by seeking significance in universal ideas, the ideas of Marx and Lenin.

MONTEFIORE'S RECOGNITION OF Stalin's merits certainly does not block his acknowledgment of Stalin's evil character. Suspicion and fear, which Montefiore calls "paranoia," dominated Stalin's life. To some extent, Montefiore argues, his paranoia was understandable in the light of his circumstances.

His paranoia was part of a personal vicious circle that was to prove so deadly for many who knew him, yet it was understandable. His radical policies led to excessive repressions that led to the opposition he most feared....

This argument is quite persuasive. I believe, however, that Montefiore does not see a more modest, but significant, contributing factor: the inevitable fragility of illegitimate personal rule. Nominally Stalin was selected as General Secretary by the Central Committee, elected in turn by the Party Congress elected freely by millions of Communists. Actually, of course, it was precisely the other way around: Stalin chose his Politburo and Central Committee, which in turn chose the delegates to the infrequent Congresses, and so forth. Because the real mode of power contradicted the formal institutions, the power gained was always under threat, and it could only be defended by informal, out-of-sight means. For Stalin, these methods came to include intimidation, blackmail, and murder. Khrushchev discarded these means, and was removed, in 1964, by a conspiracy of the "magnates" below him. Gorbachev suffered something similar.

Because Montefiore is not writing a history of Stalin's foreign and domestic policies, the reader of his fascinating book is not able to trace the operation of power in the Soviet system and Stalin's reactions to it. He cites the politically crucial September 25, 1936, telegram of Stalin to Zhdanov that touched off the terror against the party elite, but omits the critical words, "The GPU [security police] is lagging four years behind in this." Four years earlier brings us back to August 21, 1932, amid the famines of collectivization, when Martemyan Riutin prepared a platform demanding Stalin's removal from office and circulated it within the party. At that time Stalin apparently demanded Riutin's execution, a demand contrary to the existing convention that members of the party elite not be executed, and therefore resisted by the "magnates" around Stalin. As Montefiore often emphasizes, the failure to secure a political proposal was as personally important to Stalin and his magnates as a love affair or a suicide. But in the end, the author's concentration on the wonderful personal details crowds

out the political. A book cannot do everything, but this is the greatest defect of Montefiore's absorbing work. It is a defect that makes it hard to ground properly any interpretation of Stalin's "paranoia" and cruelty.

Still, Montefiore does full justice to Stalin's "heartless cruelty," displayed at every level from the murder of millions to his enjoyment at deftly placing tomatoes on chairs to ruin Mikoyan's beautiful suits at Politburo dinners. Occasionally Stalin would forgive someone, admitting in an ordinary tone, "We tortured you too much." On one level, Montefiore admits that Stalin knew many victims were innocent. His way of understanding this is to argue:

Did Stalin really believe it all? Yes, passionately, because it was politically necessary, which was better than mere truth. 'We ourselves will be able to determine,' Stalin told Ignatiev [his last security minister], 'what is true and what is not.'

Here, I believe, Montefiore comes close to understanding the full problem of a regime based on the public sovereignty of the philosophic truth, which "scientific socialism" claimed to be. Any government is forced to make numerous merely tactical decisions. If, *a priori*, that government's decisions flow from its scientific knowledge, every tactical necessity is invested with the apodictic character of Truth. The regime based on the truth converts itself in practice into one based on the most systematic falsehood.

Another contributing factor was, in my opinion, Stalin's lower-class origin, one step removed from the peasantry. It is no longer fashionable to say it, but people who lead the tough life of the poor tend to be tough and callous toward others. Across many societies, for example, peasants are cruel to animals—except their own. Peasant coarseness may have set Stalin on the road of indifference to the suffering of millions, just as it predisposed him to crude obscenities and contempt for women.

Without any doubt, however, Montefiore is right to see in Bolshevik ideology the major determinant of Stalin's cruelty. Throughout his life, according to Montefiore, Stalin "remained a fanatical Marxist." Marxism was a comprehensive, pseudo-philosophic explanation of the world and offered a religious salvation to mankind. Montefiore rightly notes that most Bolsheviks came from religious backgrounds, a connection true of many 19th-century Russian radicals before them. But the place of religion had been filled, for them, with the icy grandeur of materialist science.

Stalin lectured Bukharin that the "the personal element...is not worth a brass

farthing"...They cultivated their coldness. "A Bolshevik should love his work more than his wife," said Kirov.

Kirov, accordingly, had not seen his sisters for 20 years when he was killed. With such an attitude toward their nearest and dearest, it was easy to snuff out any compassion toward those defined as opponents. These Bolshevik attitudes were exacerbated by the pitiless, chaotic civil war that inaugurated their rule.

It was here that Stalin grasped the convenience of death as the simplest and most effective political tool.... [D]uring the Civil War the Bolsheviks, clad in leather boots, coats and holsters, embraced a cult of the glamour of violence that Stalin made his own.

That Bolshevik taste for the absolute—for Utopia and violence—seems far distant now in the West that gave it birth. But it has reappeared within the Islamic world. The re-creation of a universal Caliphate, which ceased to rule all Muslim lands about the year 800, has become a widespread demand of radical Islamic groups from Morocco to Central Asia—a demand as abstract and utopian as Communism itself. In pursuit of such aims a cult of death as pitiless as Stalin's has gained widespread ascendancy over radical Muslims. The war against this style of tyranny demands the same energies, and meets with the same Western equivocations, as the war against Stalinism.

AMONG US, UTOPIAN SOLUTIONS ARE no longer advocated as part of a comprehensive political program. Ideology has become more elusive, but perhaps therefore more insidious. Is not a demand like homosexual marriage as comprehensive and drastic a reordering of human practices as elements of the Bolshevik program? Certainly it is pressed with the same sincere conviction of its moral urgency. With equal urgency American science is dazzled by the prospect of improving men as they are, with all their undeserved deformities and heart-rending sufferings, by genetic measures. To make such changes is now within our grasp, but the eventual objective is far from clear. Perhaps it is useful to brood once more upon the rage emptied on the world by Stalin and his magnates. They, too, had the very best of intentions.

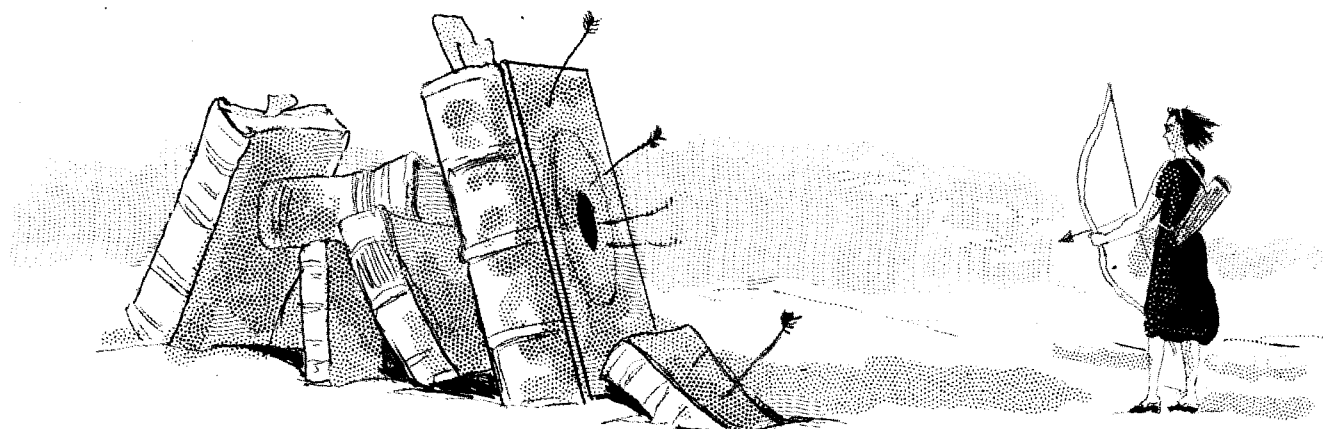
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Book Review by Clifford Orwin

THE STRAUSSIANS ARE COMING!

Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire, by Anne Norton.
Yale University Press, 256 pages, \$25



TOO OFTEN, BETWEEN SO-CALLED Straussians and other scholars there prevails only a dialogue of the deaf. Although Anne Norton might seem qualified to ameliorate this situation, unfortunately she has not done so here. And her intention is too obviously poisonous to merit a friendly reply.

Norton's strategy for attacking Straussians isn't new; it was pioneered by European journalists. Here's how it works. Rather than take on Leo Strauss (bigger game than you can handle!), pay him some measure of lip service. You may even distinguish between his "students" (few and good) and his "disciples" (many and bad). Having thus established your fair-mindedness, you blast the "disciples" (the Straussians) for not living up to the standards of the Master.

Norton, a professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, brings little that is novel to this strategy, except for a personal twist. As it happens, she actually spent her formative years at the University of Chicago studying with Straussian teachers, hobnobbing with Straussian students, and (last but not least) being *trusted* by Straussians. Odd that in her litany of Straussian errors Norton never comments on this one.

Not that she ever actually *was* a Straussian; no, this is a kiss-and-tell book by someone who won't admit to having kissed. She never sought the confidences of Straussians; apparently her insatiable appetite for learning led them to confide in her against her will. Even so, her book resembles those anti-Catholic tracts so popular in 19th-century America, e.g., *Strange Confessions of Maria Monk*, or *Thirty Years in a Convent*. Norton too has escaped to tell her lurid tale.

Although the book is devoid of humor or iro-

ny, it is comically self-important. Norton leans hard on the war on terror, which by the end of the book will stand revealed as a Straussian plot. And she has an obligation to explain it all to us (however painful the task for her), because she was a witness to history, and her memories must not be allowed to fade into blackness. (Shades of Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel.)

Norton even whacks us with the Socratic injunction "Know thyself." But has she followed it herself? Does she even grasp her real motives in writing this book? She assures us repeatedly that they were the highest, but if there was just one little thing that she might have learned from her studies with students of Strauss, it's that nothing is so dangerous as the conviction of one's own high-mindedness.

Early in the book, Norton cites Strauss himself that in democracy every intellectual movement owes an accounting of itself to the public. Fair enough. But what has that to do with her? She's not a Straussian; her book offers not self-disclosure but merely the trashing of an enemy. Criticism earns moral credit especially when it's self-criticism, and of that this book contains not a glimmer.

Norton seems unaware that this typical exercise in academic self-promotion reads just like one. Only our Anne always got it right; only she grasps the big picture. Only she can lecture non-Straussians for maligning Strauss (the better, of course, to confirm them in their fear and loathing of Straussians) while lecturing Straussians for having remained in tutelage to him. Mostly, though, she praises herself for her role in bringing Social Justice to the University after its dark night of Exclusiveness.

She really warms to this last theme. She is

delighted to be the cheerleader for her generation and the new world of diversity that it claims to have brought us. Perhaps I didn't put that quite right. Cheerleaders are perky; Norton is unrelentingly preachy.

THE STRUCTURE OF LEO STRAUSS AND *the Politics of American Empire* is fairly simple: Norton proceeds from one Straussian transgression to the next. After the expected frisson of indignation has subsided, she reels us back in to the academically approved opinion. This is a perfectly sensible format for a book that speaks to the already persuaded.

Yet despite this colorful riot of Straussian malfeasance one can't help feeling that the book is mostly composed of filler. Apparently Norton is confident that we just can't get enough of her wisdom, because she lectures us on absolutely everything, from the role of the mass media to the unpleasantness of postmodern warfare to the moral perils of America's relationship with Israel. In fact, this fierce enemy of dogmatism proves to have fixed opinions on everything under the sun.

The second half of the book is devoted mostly to the left-liberal boilerplate critique of neoconservatism. (Cursed be those who would drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge! Horrors that anyone should have contemplated the tactical use of nuclear weapons!) I'll give Norton this much credit: she's every bit as indignant as if she were the first to denounce these enormities. She musters similar talking-points passion against the Bush Administration's foreign policy. There's no point in either recounting her critique or in responding to it, inasmuch as we've all rehearsed these points so many times by now.



What then of those pages that actually concern the Straussians? For someone supposedly so expert in her subject, Norton gets an awful lot wrong. Here I choose three litmus tests, matters I know that I know better than she does. (In each case I was there and she wasn't.) These were the life and thought of the late Allan Bloom; the 1966-1969 crisis at Cornell; and the political career of my old friend William A. Galston, a former student of Bloom and leading Democratic Party intellectual. In none does her account pass muster.

Galston poses a problem for Norton, because although a Democrat and a liberal he doesn't go around bashing Straussians. She tries to dispose of him scornfully, in a sentence of three clauses *every one of which* is factually mistaken. Galston did not "move a short distance to the left" to gain entry to the Democratic Party—he remained where he had always been, a principled liberal and loyal Democrat. In remaining where he had always been he did not "move further than a good Straussian was permitted to go"; no one ever suggested banishing Galston because he was a Democrat (as were almost all of the Straussians at Cornell). And the "[Democratic] party had not moved considerably to the right" at the time that Galston assumed an active role in it: he assumed that role out of concern that it had moved too far to the left, as confirmed by the pasting that Walter Mondale had just received.

Bloom is a special case, for Norton as for so many others. He is the heavy of her piece: "Bloom, far more than Strauss, has shaped the Straussians who govern in America. Bloom taught both the most powerful and the most vociferously ideological of the Straussians." Apart from this dubious claim, she has little new to say about Bloom, but exudes such obsessive personal hatred that she should take it up with her analyst. Much of her tirade against Bloom depends on her reading of his celebrated book *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987). The typical reader might look for references to check her claims. He won't find them, here or elsewhere. Perhaps Yale University Press is broke and can't afford to print footnotes anymore. How convenient for Norton, whom it frees from providing documentation for charges that could be politely described as libelous.

I'll begin with the hideous claim that Bloom yearned for a university without women, blacks, or other non-whites. Nothing in Bloom's book or his life supports this conclusion. Bloom was indeed frightened of women, but recognizing this as a defect he struggled mightily to overcome it. He loved dearly his female students at Chicago and they have remained loyal to him ever since. Norton doesn't mention this. Similarly groundless is Bloom's supposed aversion to non-whites.

Yes, he opposed affirmative action, which he thought bad for those who practiced it and bad for those upon whom it was practiced. As for non-Westerners, their influx into the academy was a matter of great joy to him: he particularly delighted in his Islamic students.

Bloom was a great teacher, which Norton grudgingly acknowledges. She claims, however, that the crisis at Cornell embittered and extinguished him. She conveniently fails to mention the decade in Toronto that followed, where, if anything, he achieved even greater triumphs. And her insistence that he failed as a teacher at Chicago clashes with his own view that he attracted some of his very finest students there.

The gravest of Norton's claims is that "later (i.e. after Cornell)... [Bloom] participated in a politics of censorship and intimidation." Really? How? When? Where? Against whom? No amplification is offered, and of course no documentation.

Norton intones that *Closing* announced "the conservative position in the emergent culture wars." But Bloom was never a conservative, and he wrote the book as a liberal addressing liberals. The initial reviews in the liberal press were favorable, and conservatives championed the book only when liberals commended it to them by turning against it. Bloom was a lifelong Democrat who revered Roosevelt's New Deal as the peak of modern American politics. (One thing he shared with Strauss was that both voted for Adlai Stevenson.) Shortly before his death in the fall of 1992, Bloom exhorted me to support Bill Clinton. He insisted that only the Democratic Party had consistently met the challenges of the 20th century.

Like many Democrats nurtured on the New and Fair Deals, Bloom did oppose the party's McGovernite turn, which saddled it with bad policies and weak candidates, initiating its sorry slide from ascendancy into its present debility. (Bloom looked to Clinton to halt that slide.) But to fight for a sensible liberalism is not, contra Norton, to be a Republican in disguise. Galston is only one of several Straussians who have worked for (or even run as) Democrats, but of course you won't learn that from Norton. (For the record, I too am a Democrat, not that I'm happy with the party as it is.)

As to what Straussians think, what sort of work they do, what they understand themselves to be defending (*not* a "canon"), their views toward non-Western cultures and students who originate in them, their attitude toward popular culture and the value of interpreting it, their attitude toward the insights of postmodern thinkers; on all these topics the errors pile up like snow in a blizzard. Norton even commits some clear cases of mistaken identity. Donald Kagan will be astonished to discover that he's

a Straussian; Richard Perle and David Frum have a similar surprise in store for them. And how about Zalmay Khalilzad, the proof of whose Straussianism is that he once underlined a sentence in a book by Alexandre Kojève? Ah, but who had lent Khalilzad that book? Norton, that's who! Q.E.D.

Norton finds much in the writings of various Straussians with which to disagree; that makes two of us. And she raises some valid questions. It's just that behind every question lurks a thirst for character assassination.

AS HER TITLE INDICATES, NORTON makes much of the supposed Straussian influence on the Bush Administration's foreign policies. Here we encounter the best-known Straussian in public life, Paul Wolfowitz. He's absolutely crucial to Norton's case because despite her huffing and puffing about Straussian influence in Washington, he remains the only supposed Straussian (and Bloom student) to achieve real importance as a policymaker. But is he much of a Straussian, or a Straussian at all?

I've known Wolfowitz for four decades. Yes, Bloom impressed him at Cornell, but he also kept his distance from Bloom, as he did during his graduate years at Chicago, too. Wolfowitz is no ideologue, and neither "Straussian" nor "conservative" begins to describe him. For most of his life he was a Democrat, and he has always looked up to such fighting Democratic liberals as Truman, Acheson, Scoop Jackson, and Sam Nunn.

I'll readily admit that I supported the Iraq war and still do. I regard the recent successful elections in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the hopeful stirrings among the Palestinians, as welcome vindications of it. But I don't support it as a Straussian. A pro-war stance is one for which Straussianism is neither necessary—are Christopher Hitchens, Michael Ignatieff, Paul Berman, and Joseph Lieberman all Straussians now?—nor sufficient. My admittedly unscientific survey suggests that roughly as many of my Straussian friends and students opposed the war as supported it. They were wrong, but Straussians are as free to be wrong as anybody else, and I don't deem them any less Straussian for our disagreement on this matter.

Apart from my own judgment that the war was appropriate, I make no claim that Strauss would have supported it. Readers of the *Claremont Review of Books* will recall Thomas G. West's careful essay on this subject in the Summer 2004 issue ("Leo Strauss and American Foreign Policy"). Deferring to him, I'll say only this: Would Strauss have supported the bold gambit of extending liberal democracy by draining the Augean stables of Islamic

tyranny and theocracy? Yes—if he had accepted the long-term necessity of so doing in order to defend the existing liberal democracies in this age of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Would Strauss have accepted that necessity? You'd have to ask him, and he's been dead for 31 years. The question is whether we accept it (obviously, I do), a decision that can't depend primarily on a reading of Strauss.

THERE ARE SERIOUS ARGUMENTS AGAINST this war, and Norton repeats some of them. On the whole, however, her book saves the worst for last. In her penultimate chapter, "Athens and Jerusalem," she contrasts Strauss's position on that issue with certain contemporaries'. She claims that he saw the problem of Athens and Jerusalem as that of reason and revelation, which as such embraced Islam as well as Judaism and Christianity. This problem defied political resolution, generally and in particular through Zionism. She quotes extensively from an essay by Strauss on Hermann Cohen—and presents, as the views of Strauss, *Strauss's description of the views of Cohen*.

For Straussians on the other hand, so she claims, the resolution of the problem of Athens and Jerusalem is entirely practical, and consists in America's unwavering support for Israel. This policy thus implies an antipathy to anti-Semitism that is itself anti-Semitic, for Arabs too are Semites; though Strauss loved and studied Muslim thinkers, Straussians hate "Arabs and Muslims" and have made them "the targets of unrestrained persecution." She offers no evidence for this absurd assertion, unless you count Harry V. Jaffa's characterization of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority as a "gangster regime." Never mind all the brave Palestinian reformers who, concurring in this view, braved murder at the hands of Arafat's thugs; Norton knows anti-Arab prejudice when she sees it. In any case, this gross Straussian campaign of persecution of Muslims apparently culminated in the deposition of Saddam Hussein.

Let's return to the question of Strauss's own

views. Norton conveniently fails to note that despite his insistence that there could be no political solution to philosophical and theological problems, he never wavered in his support of Israel and Zionism. Nor does she display any awareness that her fanciful notion of anti-Semitism mirrors that of Arab propagandists, who are fond of denying that their murderous slanders of the Jews qualify as anti-Semitism—for aren't Arabs, too, Semites?

Nor does Norton mention that Strauss himself more than once identified the term "anti-Semitism" as no more than a confection of late 19th-century German Jew-hatred. In those days a pseudoscientific term rendered anything respectable. Hatred of Arabs never played the slightest part in it. Can she possibly be ignorant of this?

Norton fiddles while the Twin Towers burn. Her suggestion that we could all get along with Islam if it weren't for the closed mindedness of Straussians would be laughable if it weren't ludicrous. In Toronto alone in recent years three manifestly Straussian students have resolved to dedicate their lives to the study of Islamic thought. How many of Norton's own students have done so?

She contrasts Strauss's affirmation of Islamic philosophy with Straussians' (or neocons' or George Bush's) supposed crusade against Islam. But Strauss praised Islamic philosophy, not Islamofascism. Norton stresses that Baghdad was once Farabi's city: "my story ends here, as the city where Farabi taught Strauss is occupied by those who call themselves his students." Yes, and Rome was once the city of Cato the Elder, but try finding him there today. If I understand Norton's argument correctly, it's that Saddam's removal was an intolerable insult to the dignity of medieval Baghdad's philosophers.

Norton ends her book with some airy queries concerning the future of American democracy as "the questions on the ground in Baghdad." Darned if our troops haven't found other things on the ground there. Just as I was reading Norton's book they discovered some-

thing dumped in the streets of Fallujah. It was the body of the saintly aid worker Margaret Hassan, disemboweled and otherwise mutilated. The "question on the ground in Baghdad" is whether the brutal killers who have long held so much of Islam in thrall will gain a signal victory there or suffer a signal defeat. The American (and supposedly Straussian) "occupiers" have rallied those Iraqis determined to defeat them. The awesome recent election has confirmed the depth of that determination. Whose side are you on, Ms. Norton? Do you really figure Al-Farabi for the ally of Al-Zarqawi?

NORTON'S BOOK WILL HAVE A SHORT shelf life. Subsequent events in the Middle East have already overtaken it entirely. Her book faithfully reflects a particularly unpleasant moment in American intellectual life. The liberal Left, more hegemonic than ever in the academy, watches helplessly as its power ebbs in society at large. It has no idea how to stop the bleeding. Precisely because Straussians are so vulnerable to attack within the university, they make great scapegoats for explaining the events outside it. Michael Moore couldn't elect a president, but the academics who had lionized him can still police opinion in their own backyard, all the while jawing about diversity. Objectively speaking, as the Marxists like to say, such intimidation of anyone who would hire a Straussian is the goal of Norton's book.

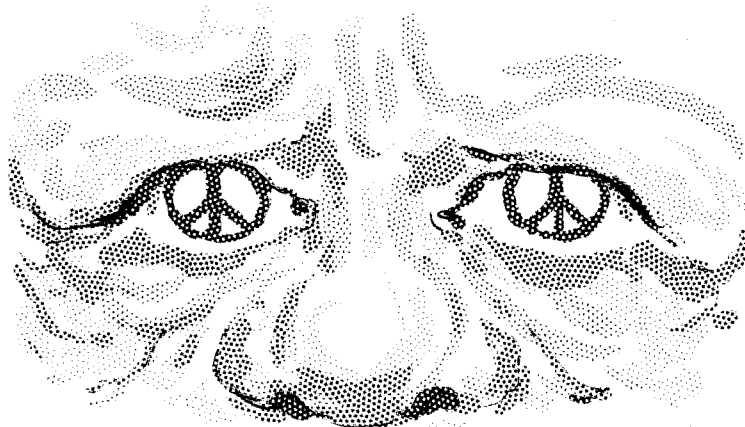
This won't help the Left politically. It really has to ask itself just why it has done so badly, lately. It should practice what Norton preaches and actually make an attempt to know itself (and the American people, while it's at it). The timing of the book's publication was unfortunate: in the aftermath of the Kerry defeat it reads like the whine of a very nasty loser.

Clifford Orwin is professor of political science and director of the Program in Political Philosophy and International Affairs at the University of Toronto. He is completing a book on the role of compassion in modern life and thought.

MALaise FOREVER

The Real Jimmy Carter: How Our Worst Ex-President Undermines American Foreign Policy, Coddles Dictators, and Created the Party of Clinton and Kerry, by Steven F. Hayward.

Regnery Publishing Inc., 272 pages, \$27.95



PERHAPS THE ONLY OFFENSE STEVEN Hayward does not accuse his subject of in *The Real Jimmy Carter* is pacifism. Not that Hayward wouldn't have firm ground. Our 39th president is so resistant to the use of force that not only did he oppose both wars in Iraq but it turns out he opposed the Revolutionary War, too. During a television appearance last fall, Carter explained, "I think another parallel [with Iraq] is that in some ways the Revolutionary War could have been avoided. It was an unnecessary war. Had the British Parliament been a little more sensitive to the colonials' really legitimate complaints and requests the war could have been avoided completely, and of course now we would have been a free country now as is Canada and India and Australia, having gotten our independence in a nonviolent way."

Leave aside, if you will, the fact that India achieved its independence through a protracted civil war that left two million dead, and let's move along to the next item: Carter's very peculiar boasting about the use of force. Carter's one brush with the military that he commanded for four years was his failed effort to rescue American hostages in Iran. When consulting with military planners, Carter mandated that there should be no "wanton killing" of Iranians. He even went so far as to explore the use of "sleeping gas" in the mission. Ultimately the rescue failed and cost the lives of eight American soldiers. Yet in a telling footnote, Carter defined the exercise not as a "military operation," but as a "humanitarian mission." Why? So he could continue boasting that he was "the first American president in fifty years who has never sent troops into combat."

Whether Carter was our first pacifist president or simply a *Guinness Book* narcissist is up for discussion. What seems beyond dispute is that Carter was the worst president of the modern era. Steven Hayward makes an even broader claim: that as an ex-president, Carter is a menace now more than ever.

The Real Jimmy Carter is a natural extension of Hayward's magisterial *The Age of Reagan* (2001), in which he chronicled the 16 years of American politics leading up to the 1980 election. All of that time spent with '70s liberalism left Hayward with a healthy distaste for America's most famous peanut farmer, making *The Real Jimmy Carter* more indictment than biography.

While his research is meticulous, it appears at times that Hayward is swatting at mosquitoes with a sledgehammer. He has trouble granting Carter credit for anything at all. He criticizes Governor Carter as a hypocrite for sponsoring anti-busing initiatives—even though Hayward, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and the Pacific Research Institute, would likely applaud opposition to forced busing. When President Carter decontrols oil prices—another policy the author supports—Hayward gripes that "Carter, typically, mitigated the beneficial effects of decontrol by phasing it in over a two-year period."

In another section, Hayward suggests that Carter was lobbying the Soviet Union to aid Walter Mondale during the 1984 election. Carter did indeed meet with Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin in early 1984. Hayward writes: "Dobrynin was too discreet to let on whether Carter said or was hinting that the Soviets should do something to help out Walter Mondale's candidacy against Reagan that year."

This is uncomfortably close to asking Carter when he stopped beating his wife.

Hayward attempts to link Carter not just to his own failures, but to every failure of the Democratic Party in the last 30 years. He compares Carter's energy policy to HillaryCare. He pictures Carter with a grinning Howard Dean. He claims that Carter got "a virtual second term with the arrival of President Bill Clinton," which makes little sense, since the rest of that particular chapter is spent explaining how Carter thwarted Clinton policy in Haiti, Bosnia, and North Korea, infuriating the president at every turn.

In casting about for any club with which to beat Carter, Hayward rallies some unsavory allies to his cause. Criticizing Carter's handling of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, he notes that the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists'* famously partisan, kooky, and unreliable "Doomsday Clock" was—*gasp!*—close to midnight. He even quotes bank robber Willie Sutton calling Carter a "confidence man," as if the political musings of a convicted felon are worthy of our consideration.

MANNERS DICTATE THAT NO EX-president deserves, or at least should receive, this sort of treatment. But if—hypothetically speaking, of course—an ex-president *could* deserve the business end of a Hayward, surely Jimmy Carter would be your man.

It is difficult to think of another president as personally unbecoming as Carter. For starters, there is his general wackiness. He is the only president to have filed a UFO sighting with the Air Force; he has claimed to be a "nuclear physi-

cist" after taking one single-semester, non-credit course in nuclear physics; and his mini-crusades have included tilts against *People* magazine and in favor of marriage. (He once told his White House staff, "For those of you living in sin, I hope you'll get married. For those of you who've left your spouses, go back home.") But behind the genial eccentricity is a tiny monster.

During his days in state politics, Carter ran campaigns that treaded dangerously close to outright racism. He once attacked his opponent, Carl Sanders, for preventing George Wallace from speaking on state property. (Carter would later write to one constituent, "George Wallace and I are in agreement on most issues.") Sanders was, Carter charged coyly, trying "to please a group of ultra-liberals." His campaign sent out a mailing featuring a picture of Sanders with two black basketball players—Carter's aides were later found passing out copies of this mailing at a Ku Klux Klan rally. Another campaign leaflet explained "that Sanders had paid tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr." In a detail sure to catch the eye of media-bias obsessives, Hayward notes that a *Time* magazine cover story on Carter's election faced the ugliness with the following gentle formulation: "To get elected, it was necessary to make some gestures toward the past."

Carter was never particularly gracious. His aide Hamilton Jordan remembers Carter telling him, "Show me a good loser and I will show you a loser." He described Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin as a "psycho." After the shah, America's ally, was deposed in Iran, he sought sanctuary in the United States. Approached about this idea, President Carter responded, "F--- the shah."

THESE PERSONAL FAILINGS WOULD MATTER less had Carter been a capable president. Hayward demonstrates beyond a reasonable doubt that he was not. At home, President Carter was something short of a disaster, overseeing stagflation, unemployment, and, of course, malaise. Shunning the overweening optimism most presidents project, Carter tried to lower people's expectations. "We must face the fact that the energy shortage is permanent," he said in one televised address. Then in 1979 Carter disappeared into seclusion at Camp David to reconceptualize his presidency. Meeting with one group of advisors he lamented, "I think it's inevitable that there will be a lower standard of living than what everybody had always anticipated.... The only trend is downward. But it's impossible to get people to face up to this."

With an approval rating in the low 20s, Carter emerged to give his "malaise" speech. (The president, however, never used the word

"malaise"; that came from pollster Pat Caddell in the aftermath.) While most of us are well-acquainted with Carter's signature moment, his speech still represents something of a singular event in presidential oratory. Carter told his audience that "all the legislation in the world can't fix what's wrong with America" and blamed the state of affairs on a "crisis of confidence" as people lost faith in the American way. In the most astonishing passage, Carter said,

The symptoms of this crisis of the American spirit are all around us. For the first time in the history of our country, a majority of our people believe that the next five years will be worse than the past five years. Two-thirds of our people do not even vote. The productivity of American workers is actually dropping, and the willingness of Americans to save for the future has fallen below that of all other people in the Western world.

Faced with a challenge from the American people, he decided to do what he had always done against political opponents: go negative.

Yet even this bizarre performance pales next to Carter's work in the realm of foreign affairs; the list of mistakes is unnerving. On the big questions of the day—Communism and how to fight the Cold War—he can only be judged a failure. President Carter lambasted Americans for having an "inordinate fear" of Communism and explained that Russia would "continue to push for communism throughout the world and to probe for possibilities for expansion of their system, which I think is a legitimate purpose for them."

Carter's ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, went even further in support of the Soviet Union, defending its trial of Natan Sharansky as "a gesture of independence." "After all," Young said defiantly, "we also have hundreds, if not thousands of people in our jails that I would categorize as political prisoners." (Even Carter's public appointments were disastrous: Young, whom Carter called "the best man I have ever known in public life," also called Britain a "racist" country and predicted that the Ayatollah Khomeini would eventually be regarded as "some kind of saint." Carter dismissed him only under public pressure after Young attended a secret PLO meeting in 1979.)

When it came to the nuclear buildup, Carter was not afraid to attack the American public there, too, saying, "If the American people get the idea, which is mistaken, that a nuclear arms race on our side is going to cause the Soviets to quit building nuclear weapons on their side, they are silly." History, it turns out, can be even meaner than Steven Hayward.

CARTER'S SILLINESS COST AMERICA THE Panama Canal, Iran, Afghanistan, and Nicaragua. Yet with all this carnage trailing in his wake, what is Jimmy Carter's own appraisal of his presidency? "Allowing Ronald Reagan to become president was by far my biggest failure in office," he told Douglas Brinkley in 1995.

Here Hayward bears down and assembles an important catalogue of Carter's activities in the years since 1980, beginning with his relentless campaign against Reagan. When not speaking ill of his successor, Carter attempted to undermine other sitting presidents. In 1991 he spoke publicly against the Gulf War and—more unforgivably—went in private to Arab leaders asking them to pull out of the American coalition.

In other adventures, President Carter visited and praised North Korea's Kim Il Sung, saying he admired the "reverence with which [North Koreans] look upon their leader." Smitten with Yasser Arafat, he made fundraising trips to Saudi Arabia on behalf of the PLO. He invited Somali warlord Farah Aidid to visit him in Atlanta, calling the American attempt to capture him "regrettable." He visited Syria and praised the "good humor between" himself and Hafez Assad. Carter was so taken with Assad that when he returned to the Middle East, he submitted a false itinerary to the State Department so that he could meet with the dictator again. Hayward's frightful list goes on.

Hayward believes that Carter's liberalism has infected the Democratic Party establishment, and that this is his principal legacy. He sees Carter as the "transition figure" between the old Democratic Party and "the post-McGovern liberalism." But Carter's true legacy is of greater consequence, and is tied to the one charge Hayward neglects: pacifism.

It was Carter's pacifism that allowed the fall of the shah in Iran, giving fundamentalist Islam a nation-state to control. Subsequently, it was Carter's pacifism that encouraged the Soviets to invade Afghanistan, creating a rallying point for *mujahadeen* and, as Hayward notes, reviving the idea of jihad. Taken in concert, these two events are the catalysts that have forced the war on terrorism to its present stage. Carter's pacifism, be it *de facto* or *de jure*, shaped the modern Middle East and helped Islamic fascism survive its infancy. This is a much more dire legacy than the simple corruption of Democratic ideology.

At the end of the day, the real Jimmy Carter is not quite so bad as Steven Hayward supposes, and yet much, much worse.

Jonathan V. Last is online editor of *The Weekly Standard*.

GET SERIOUS

War and the American Presidency, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
W.W. Norton & Company, 224 pages, \$23.95

TO BE SURE, ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, Jr., has spent at least as much of his career engaged in partisan activities as in scholarly ones. Nevertheless, when the author of *The Age of Jackson* (1945) publishes a book with the title *War and the American Presidency*, the reader expects a tome that sheds light on the intellectual history of American foreign relations. What he gets is a screed for the 2004 presidential campaign.

Thankfully, the outpouring is small. The contents are recycled from the author's unconnected opinion pieces in *Foreign Affairs* and *The New York Review of Books*. The back-cover endorsements from professional partisans Walter Cronkite ("astuteness," "brilliance"), Douglas Brinkley ("an essential manifesto"), and Robert McNamara ("contrasts the Bush foreign policy with two centuries of American experience") are what one would expect. But the blurb by accomplished historian Robert Dallek ("a book for all seasons... an American classic") is a sad indication of how partisanship has crushed academic standards.

Such a little book, so much embarrassment. Here is a professional American historian who wants to call Jefferson and John Quincy Adams imperialists. He cites their high regard for Cuba's value to the United States, and their recognition that its future would be intertwined with America's. But he ignores their oft-stated, forceful opposition to governing the Cuban people or any other foreigners. In Schlesinger's circles, truth does not get in the way of a good cause.

Everywhere there are *non sequiturs*. For example: "Since we [i.e., George W. Bush] arrogate to ourselves the exclusive right to wage preventive war, we ignore the dark warning of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams against 'going abroad in search of monsters to destroy.'" Even to someone who knows nothing of Bush or Adams, Schlesinger's proposition "B" is unrelated to "A." Add to this that it is impossible to make a case that Adams's speech opposed "preventive war," that there is no evidence for the proposition that Bush's claim to the right of attacking before his country is attacked is novel, and that no U.S. official has ever claimed that this right is exclusive, and you have a feast of *non sequiturs* consisting of pure baloney.

Then there are the conspiracy theories. Did you know that Israel's intelligence service, the Mossad, knew that Iraq had no weapons

of mass destruction (WMD) but helped inveigle the Bush Administration to invade Iraq nonetheless? So for Schlesinger the invasion of Iraq was in part a Jewish conspiracy to further Israel's interests over America's. *Hmmm....*

Next to this sort of thing mere double standards are small stuff. And so Schlesinger, while chastising George W. Bush for invading Iraq without specific U.N. authorization and with *only* the American people's express permission, praises Harry Truman for having waged the Korean War—which he did without even trying to gain the U.N.'s permission as required by



Article 43 of the U.N. Charter, not to mention without asking Congress for its permission. He tops off what he regards as the invidious contrast between Bush the warmonger and Truman the peacemaker by quoting the latter: "There is nothing more foolish than to think that war can be stopped by war. You don't 'prevent' anything by war except peace."

Our Best and Brightest fawn over these and many other heroics because they are pursuing what Schlesinger calls "regime change in Washington."

The book's main point is in the second of the six reworked essays, "Eyeless in Iraq." It seizes on the fact that the first of Bush's expressed reasons for invading Iraq, its WMDs, turned out to be invalid, and that Bush himself on September 17, 2003, disavowed his halfhearted

talk of Saddam's connection to international terrorism in general and 9/11 in particular. All true. Readers of the CRB and of my "Victory" series on the war did not have to wait for the invasion—or for Schlesinger—to learn that Bush was making big mistakes by believing his advisers at the State Department and CIA regarding both the presence of WMDs and the absence of responsibility for terrorism.

In fact, Bush endorsed the CIA's official story about terrorism and 9/11 because doing otherwise would have led to confronting militarily all the Middle Eastern regimes that similarly incite, recruit, finance, and harbor terrorists. Hence the Bush team, like the Clinton team, found it more convenient to refer publicly to terrorism as the action of rogue groups, and to limit the regimes' culpability to not doing enough to stop it. Schlesinger and his friends at the *New York Review of Books* would not listen to anything else. Solicitous of their sensitivities, Bush was afraid to say that Saddam's regime—and others—had come to embody a burgeoning anti-American enterprise that we had to crush lest we really end up in a world war. But his shifting rationalizations were too clever by half, and invited his opponents to take him at his word. Thus Bush earned every last brickbat that the likes of Schlesinger and Michael Moore have thrown at him.

ENJOYING THE TROUBLES OF ADVERSARIES hoisted by their own petards, however, does not relieve academics from the responsibilities of intellectual integrity. It was good political fun for Democrats in the 2004 campaign to charge that Bush's invasion of Iraq was preventing victory in the war on terror because it had taken resources from the search for Osama bin Laden. But when an *eminence* such as Schlesinger joins the chorus, should he not at least try to explain what victory, if any, bin Laden's capture would have achieved? It seems that beating up on Bush so consumed Schlesinger, he had few thoughts for anything else.

He had expressed one of these thoughts—that the American people endanger the world by insisting on deciding for themselves how to deal with it—in a 1995 *Foreign Affairs* article, "Back to the Womb?" Now, supercharged with disdain for ordinary Americans, it is the book's first chapter.

What Schlesinger calls, interchangeably,

“unilateralism” and “isolationism” are, he says, part of the American people’s DNA. He describes American history in the 20th century as a struggle against this tendency. He quotes Franklin Roosevelt, “foreign-policy spokesman for the Democratic Party” in 1928, writing that “only by acts of international collaboration could the United States ‘regain the world’s trust and friendship and become again of service.’” In a nutshell, the American people are bad because they prefer pursuing their own interest as they understand it rather than placing themselves at the service of internationalists of all nations whose agenda is broader, more intelligent, and worthier than that of the American people. Great leaders are needed who can suppress this tendency and harness the American people’s horse to the United Nations’ cart.

Fortunately, he writes, “support for international institutions is especially strong among opinion makers and among thoughtful persons in both parties.” In Schlesinger’s view, the worst thing about Bush is that he has encouraged those crazy little Americans, those religious fanatics, of whom he says “God is their God,” to oppose their betters’ wisdom. One wonders who or what is Schlesinger’s god?

Schlesinger does not argue that Americans are unique, nor that they are uniquely bad for pursuing their interest as they see it. He simply assumes that the rest of the world is filled with disinterested, world-loving internationalists, and that the American people have a duty to serve the collective world-mind. That seems to

be his religion. He does not question it.

Only once does a bit of reality creep in. It is cold-water-in-the-face of anyone, Right or Left, who is tempted to play global chess with others’ lives:

How to persuade the housewife in Xenia, Ohio, that her husband, brother, or son should die in Bosnia or Somalia or some other remote place where vital U.S. interests are not involved? Nor is it just the Xenia housewife who must be persuaded. How many stalwart internationalists in the Council on Foreign Relations are sending their own sons to die in Iraq?

Or how many members of the Bush team? But the reader will search in vain for sincere discussion of any topic here.

SCHLESINGER’S INDICTMENT OF BUSH FOR a multitude of imaginary insults to civilization and American history detracts from the one indictment that is obviously on target and that could have been the kernel of a valuable study of war and the American presidency. Namely, since war is by its very nature a set of extraordinary events, it may naturally require that the chief executive who wages it exercise extraordinary powers. Several presidents, chiefly Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and FDR, have exercised such powers, for better or worse. But all have done so intending, mostly sincerely, that these powers be

temporary. George W. Bush is the glaring exception. He has given every indication that the powers that he and the rest of the U.S. government have accrued since 9/11 are permanent.

A historian worthy of the name would have explained how Lincoln combined the pursuit of rapid victory with concern for the restoration of full legality. He would have shown how Wilson tried to compensate for the fuzziness of his war aims by indirectly criminalizing criticism of them. Nevertheless, a scholar would show that the nation’s commonsense understanding of war as a temporary, extraordinary event made it impossible for Wilson’s wilder tendencies to do much harm. A serious historian would tell us how Roosevelt and Truman, for all their arbitrariness, led the nation in war by pointing to concrete prospects of peace. Then the historian would describe how Cold War notions of practically endless “twilight struggle” fudged the difference between war and peace, and how the ideas associated with such fudging—as well as another legacy of the Cold War, the association of the cause of civil liberties with that of anti-Americanism—made possible George Bush’s thus far uncontested claim of effectively permanent war powers.

But how is serious history to come from the modern academy if it celebrates rubbish like this?

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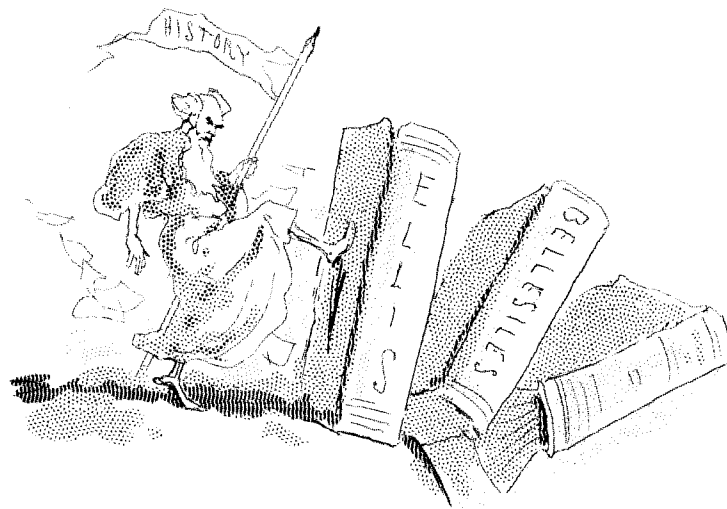
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Book Review by Peter S. Onuf

PROFESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin,
by Peter Charles Hoffer. PublicAffairs, 287 pages, \$26



IS THERE A CRISIS IN AMERICAN HISTORY? Peter Charles Hoffer, a talented and prolific practitioner who served on the American Historical Association committee that once reviewed malpractice cases, is convinced that there is “something...very wrong with historical scholarship.” A series of sensational scandals that climaxed in 2001 and 2002—the falsification of data on early American gun ownership by Michael Bellesiles, widespread plagiarism by popular historians Stephen Ambrose and Doris Kearns Goodwin, and the classroom fabrications of Joseph J. Ellis—constitute a “suppurating wound” that the profession can’t, even worse won’t, stanch. It is richly ironic that the AHA council ordered Hoffer’s Professional Division to *abandon* adjudication at precisely the moment these scandals raised such troubling questions about the discipline’s standards. Hoffer’s own experience thus exacerbates his sense of crisis. Because he identifies so profoundly with the larger community of professional historians, he takes these scandals very personally.

I suppose I should, too. Over the years, I’ve had extensive and generally friendly dealings with Bellesiles and Ellis, both fellow early Americanists. My blurb for Bellesiles’s *Arming America* (a “myth-busting tour de force”) is a particular source of personal embarrassment. The question Hoffer poses in *Past Imperfect* is whether the transgressions he recounts (and the embarrassment so many of us experienced in the Bellesiles case) reflect a profound crisis in the discipline. I am dubious. Hoffer’s distress is predicated on the existence of a professional community, defined by its own standards and

practices and by the crucial role it plays—or should play—in the larger culture; the AHA is—or should be—the institutional embodiment of the profession and enforcer of its standards. Most crucially, Hoffer argues, the profession should exercise some kind of discipline over all forms of historical writing, including popular works by amateurs or quasi-professionals. But should “we” be responsible for Ambrose and Goodwin? Are *they* members of the profession? The recently deceased Ambrose didn’t think so. “Screw it,” he told one of his last interviewers, “I don’t know that I’m all that good at academics. I am a writer.” Ambrose remained unrepentant about his plagiarism. Goodwin, trained as a political scientist, was more distressed when hers was exposed, but not by any sense that she had betrayed her calling as an historian. “Together,” Hoffer concludes, the “denunciations” of Ambrose and Goodwin “shook the history profession to its core.” This is more than a bit excessive. The earth didn’t move for me or, as far as I know, for my fellow professionals. Why should we be concerned about the transgressions of best-selling popular historians?

The first part of Hoffer’s book provides the backstory to his history of our season of scandals. American history-writing emerged with the nation itself in a time of crisis and division, when it offered an inspiring narrative and instilled a mythic sense of national unity. The emergence of professional history and its characteristic rhetorical forms (boring monographs) in the late 19th century did not subvert historians’ commitment to “the theme of one

people, one nation, one history,” despite challenges from relativists and progressives who focused on conflict and promoted inclusiveness. Instead, “consensus” and “neo-consensus” historians offered sophisticated (and increasingly ironic) accounts of a homogenized national experience. Only with the emergence of the “new” history of the 1960s (there were many “new” histories, but pride of place belongs to the “new social history”) was the conservative consensus challenged and then displaced. The new historians assaulted the bastions of consensus orthodoxy, demolishing its homogenizing, celebratory premises.

This may have been the kind of history that a self-consciously multicultural America needed, but it came at a price. General audiences looked for “proofs that American history could inspire and delight,” while hyper-specialized new historians looked the other way, writing “for one another.” Though Hoffer is a member of this insurgent generation, he is ambivalent about what it has wrought. He celebrates the new history’s inclusiveness and critical spirit, but laments that “it undermined the intellectual authority that consensus historians had claimed and...routinely exercised.” Ill-fated interventions in public controversies over historical interpretation in the 1990s—over National History Standards, or the dropping of the atomic bomb, or the Clinton impeachment—squandered whatever little authority the profession still possessed. By the time our scandal season hit, historians were lying low, ineffectually fumbling “the opportunity to construct a virtual national classroom in which they could have used the cases to teach

sound historical methods," while "the journalists and pundits got all the lessons wrong."

Hoffer is much too hard on himself and his fellow new historians. It's a healthy thing for historians to recognize the limits of their influence. Public controversies don't arise over historical methods (though historians will quarrel endlessly about the value of different approaches), but rather over the larger meanings we impute to the evidence. For better or worse, these meanings are now up for grabs. Historians can bring new evidence to the table and they can judge the quality of evidence others adduce, but they have no monopoly on larger truths. They can reconstruct the range of meanings that define the times and places they study, and thus offer illuminating genealogies of the ideas now in circulation, but that doesn't entitle them—as historians, rather than as citizens—to make normative judgments. The profession may have suffered some damage from culture wars and history scandals, as Hoffer argues so eloquently, but I'm inclined to think that, on balance, these controversies have also generated more interest in history and—in the Bellesiles case—more good historical research.

HOFFER'S ENGAGING HISTORY OF THE history profession justifies treating recent scandals as related and symptomatic developments. After all, popular history is the bastard offspring of professional history and popular historians themselves are often professionally trained. But the gap between "bad celebratory chronicle" and "sound, critical scholarship" has always yawned wide. Yet, as Hoffer argues, it was only when consensus historians, ensconced in their distant ivory towers, embraced and endorsed that "chronicle" that they could exercise any cultural authority at all. How could their successors possibly monitor the ethical lapses and interpretive leaps of Stephen Ambrose and his ilk? Hoffer's chapter on the plagiarists is well done: his indictment of Ambrose and Goodwin is comprehensive and convincing. But it's hard to sustain the sympathetic conceit that these are straying members of his own flock: plagiarizing popularizers (particularly Ambrose, who ripped off the work of respectable historians) are more a threat to the profession than a symptom of our malaise. Because Hoffer's identification with Bellesiles and Ellis is more authentic, and less opportunistic, his treatment of their scandals is much more compelling.

Hoffer's chapter on the Ellis case is a tour de force. Previous commentators have focused on the ways in which the charismatic teacher betrayed the trust of his students at Mount Holyoke by pretending that he served in Vietnam, participated in the civil rights move-

ment, and even starred on his high school football team. But Hoffer persuasively argues that Ellis's fabrications were also reflected in his popular histories of the founders. "The lies he told about himself and the way he told them changed the way he wrote history," transforming "able craftsmanship into high art." Ellis could have it both ways. Admired (and envied) by his fellow professionals, he also reveled in the adulation of students and readers. The stakes were raised when Ellis himself became a celebrity and began spinning classroom tales to interviewers and audiences across the country. Perhaps the increasing "risk of exposure and censure" was its own titillating reward? In Hoffer's sympathetic telling, Ellis's saga is a classic morality tale. Some of us might resist the seductive lure of fame and fortune—though pathetically few are ever tested—but who wouldn't sell his soul to produce "high art"? This is not selling out; it's selling up. And, after all, the price Ellis paid was not great. Though stripped of his chair at Mount Holyoke and put on unpaid leave for a year, book royalties continued to pour in. Now Ellis "is back in harness," Hoffer ruefully concludes, "penance done"—and a new book on Washington flying off the bookstore shelves.

Ellis may be a reputable historian, but it's hard to see him as one of Hoffer's new historians. Historians' controversies over the founding period are not interesting to him, and it is fair to say that his contributions to "sound critical scholarship"—as opposed to "high art"—have not been substantial. It might make more sense, then, to lump him with the popularizers (though certainly not with the plagiarizers). That would leave only a single new historian, Michael Bellesiles, in Hoffer's crew of malefactors. The chapter on the Bellesiles case will not be as gripping to general readers as the Ellis chapter because it is so largely devoted to a close critical analysis of flawed and probably fraudulent probate data. But it is the most important chapter in *Past Imperfect*, the best short review of a perplexing case that does indeed raise critical issues for the profession. Hoffer's chapter succeeds because it is exemplary history writing, achieving the kind of balance and respect for evidence that gives our best work its authority. Yet it is also deeply engaged, sympathetic but unflinching. In writing about Bellesiles, Hoffer is writing about his generation of new historians and the more insidious temptations it faces. "Bellesiles is a good man and often a fine historian"—judgments I strongly endorse—but he was carried away by his thesis, seduced by "noble goals" that betrayed his calling as an historian.

Historians are trained to treat evidence meticulously and to provide readers with citations that take them directly to their sources. Because

our research is supposedly transparent, or at least replicable, we assume that fellow researchers are always acting in good faith: interpretations may have a short shelf-life (we are all "revisionists," responding to changing historiographical agendas), but the "facts" we assemble should be trustworthy and thus available for reinterpretation. Bellesiles claimed to have looked at thousands of probate records that revealed that an unexpectedly small number of Americans (14.7% for the period 1765-1790) were gun-owners. If this were true, it would reinforce the contemporary argument that the drafters of the Second Amendment intended to create a "well-armed militia"—a collective responsibility—and not secure the individual right of gun ownership. Not surprisingly, liberal historians were delighted to find that the "facts" supported their policy preference for gun control; nor was it surprising that opponents of gun control joined by skeptical historians would take another look at the evidence.

What they found—or, more accurately, didn't find—was shocking. Bellesiles's numbers bore little relation to the documents—where they were identified accurately enough to be consulted. Because his research notes were allegedly destroyed in an office flood, it was impossible for investigators to determine whether this was conscious fraud or a case of sloppiness on a massive scale. In the end, it didn't matter. A distinguished committee commissioned by Emory University, Bellesiles's home institution, concluded that he had violated that institution's research standards as well as the AHA's "standard of professional historical scholarship." Bellesiles resigned at the end of 2002. Unlike the other subjects of *Past Imperfect*, it is by no means clear that Bellesiles will bounce back to fame or fortune, or even to a regular teaching job. By seeking to enlist friends, colleagues, and professional associations against the critical assaults and alleged personal threats of his detractors, Bellesiles betrayed the profession's trust. Indeed, the present-day "profession" only emerges clearly in these pages in its reluctant but inexorable alienation from one of its own.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO INTERPRET this sad tale. Hoffer emphasizes the ways in which the popular press took the lead in all the cases he discusses, but here it is clear that skeptical academics—graduate students, law professors, and fellow historians—kept the controversy alive, not (as Bellesiles would have had us think) by reactionary partisan sniping, but rather by ongoing research in the sources. I certainly feel chastened and humbled—my own "authority" as a blurber has suffered a setback—but I'm not persuaded that the profession as a whole is suffering from a "sup-

purating wound." Hoffer's reaction to the fate of the AHA's Professional Division is understandable. But the AHA's decision merely confirmed its own irrelevance. After all, all of these high profile cases were broken in the popular press, and none came before the Professional Division (if they had, Hoffer could not have written about them, and that would have been a shame). Pursuing miscreants without effective sanctions, the AHA would only expose itself to ridicule, if not expensive and embarrassing litigation. It does not follow, however, that the "profession"—including critics who dogged Bellesiles persistently after he published pre-

liminary results of his research in the *Journal of American History* in 1996—failed to rise to the occasion. Nor am I persuaded that the "marketplace of ideas" failed in this case, however irrelevant it may have proved in the others. It took too long, perhaps, but better history ultimately drove out worse.

Historians are disproportionately "liberal," as this tag (or charge) is promiscuously applied in these extraordinarily polarized days. But we are a diverse, contrary, "critical, and self-critical" bunch. By and large, we do not suffer from delusions of policy-making grandeur. If some of us had set off to find a "usable past," we have

returned with sober second thoughts, humbled not only by the past's complexities but even more by the complexities of our own historical moment. Though Peter Hoffer's jeremiad overshoots its mark, it is an excellent and entertaining introduction to contemporary American historiography.

Peter S. Onuf is Thomas Jefferson Foundation Professor of History at the University of Virginia. With his brother Nicholas G. Onuf, he is the author of the forthcoming *Nations, Markets, and War: Modern History and the Coming of the Civil War* (University of Virginia Press).

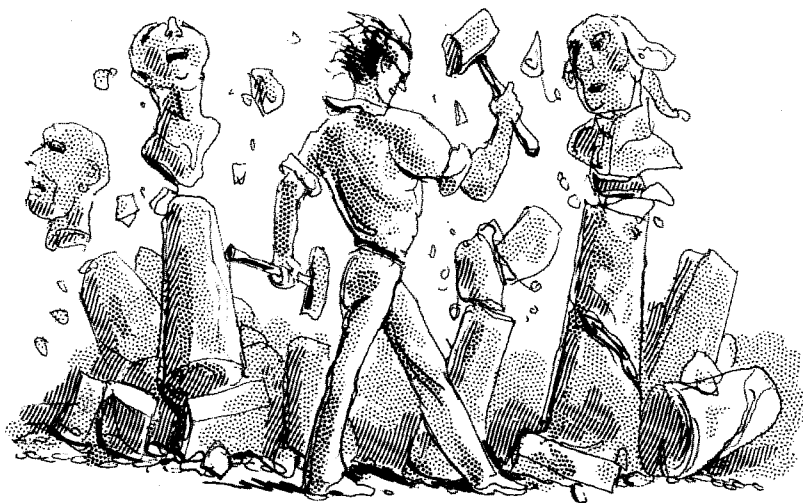
Book Review by David J. Bobb

THE FUTURE OF PATRIOTISM

A People's History of the United States, Abridged Teaching Edition, revised and updated by Howard Zinn.
The New Press, 496 pages, \$25 (cloth), \$13 (paper)

Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past, by Ray Raphael.
The New Press, 368 pages, \$26.95

A Patriot's History of the United States: From Columbus's Great Discovery to the War on Terror,
by Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen. Penguin (Sentinel), 800 pages, \$29.95



PUBLISHED A QUARTER CENTURY AGO, Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* sought to vanquish the myths of American exceptionalism by reinterpreting our national story from Columbus's "conquest" to the Carter presidency (although it has been revised and expanded to include 9/11). Zinn, a professor of history at Boston University until his retirement in 1988, claimed to write from the perspective of people abused by history's hegemony, and saw his project as nothing less than a historiographical revolution.

Twenty-five years later, the revolution has

gone mainstream. The "new social history" movement from which Zinn took inspiration is now widespread throughout the academy. *A People's History* has sold more than a million copies since its publication. The book is also available in a teaching edition that has inspired the sales of lesson plans, history wall charts, and companion collections of primary source documents. "Comrade Zinn," as he was called by the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, is now in classrooms all across America.

Drawn by his brisk prose, conspiratorial plot lines, and zeal for political confrontation,

Zinn's readers have made him a hero of leftist causes from East Timor to the Upper West Side. Worshipped like a rock star at anti-war rallies for the last 35 years, he opposed not only the Gulf War and the war in Iraq, but also the war in Afghanistan. Joining his battle against "guns and greed" is his ideological twin, Noam Chomsky, and the army of students that they have led into radical activism. "If democracy was to be given any meaning," Zinn writes near the end of the teaching edition of *A People's History*, "if it was to go beyond the limits of capitalism and nationalism, this would not come—if his-

tory was any guide—from the top. It would come through citizens' movements, educating, organizing, agitating, striking, boycotting, demonstrating, threatening those in power with disruption of the stability they needed."

For Zinn, political history and statesmen's history are useless for giving democracy "meaning." These are antiquarian, indeed reactionary, and must be displaced by social history that "threaten[s] those in power"; in effect, he replaces political history with politicized history. Writing history, therefore, takes on a new, revolutionary urgency. In "The Coming Revolt of the Guards," a chapter in *A People's History*, Zinn asks his readers to "imagine what radical change would require of us all." His answer is "utopian," he unapologetically explains:

Everyone could share the routine but necessary jobs for a few hours a day, and leave most of the time free for enjoyment, creativity, labors of love, and yet produce enough for an equal and ample distribution of goods. Certain basic things would be abundant enough to be taken out of the money system and be available—free—to everyone: food, housing, health care, education, transportation.

Later in the book he gives specific policy prescriptions, among them that free health care would be possible based on a 70-90% tax (merely "going back to the post-World War II level") on the "superrich" combined with aggressive "demilitarization."

DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF FOOTNOTES in *A People's History*, smart students will recognize Zinn's book as Marx for the masses. Zinn's popularity today has a certain irony inasmuch as the secondary schools typically employing Zinn's work are those at which tuition (much less food, housing, or health care) is far from free. Urban and suburban school districts trying to close "achievement gaps" increasingly have adopted Zinn's multicultural approach, as well. Many administrators and teachers believe that his dismissal of "white man's history" in favor of multiple minority perspectives will help minority students "believe in themselves" and care about academic success.

Contrary to the hopes of those who look to him as a unifying force, Zinn's arguments in *A People's History* do nothing to unite American citizens of any age. Instead, his Marxist confidence in the downward spiral of history suggests that America will be forever fractured—at least until the Revolution comes. The American Founders inherited the spirit of conquest by which the hemisphere was first subjugated by Columbus. "The American system is

the most ingenious system of control in world history," Zinn declares. Paying sarcastic tribute to the founders' "genius," he maintains that their system of national control was designed to keep women, ethnic minorities, and the poor in a perpetual state of subservience. The Constitution's framers (and every American generation since), he argues, neglected the "flaming radical language" of the Declaration of Independence, which in his mind mandates absolute egalitarianism.

Zinn's thesis is that the "elites" extend to "the people" just enough liberty to keep "the people" politically quiet. In the early republic, the wealthy bribed the middle class with financial benefits and political security; the middle class in turn provided "buffers against the blacks, the Indians, and the very poor whites." This system allows "the elite to keep control with a minimum of coercion, a maximum of law—all made palatable by the fanfare of patriotism and unity." Law and order, "patriotism and unity" are distractions established by the elite, who have been terrified that the underclass will awaken to the truth of "the competition and conniving that marked the spirit of Western capitalism." As he remarks about American race relations, "Only the radicals made an attempt to break the racial barriers: Socialists, Trotskyists, Communists most of all."

Fortunately for "the people," Zinn offers an end to their false consciousness. His angry tone gives way to rhapsody when he describes the achievements of the early U.S. labor movement. He hymns the members of the Industrial Workers of the World: "But their energy, their persistence, their inspiration to others, their ability to mobilize thousands at one place, one time, made them an influence on the country far beyond their numbers. They traveled everywhere (many were unemployed or migrant workers), they organized, wrote, spoke, sang, spread their message and their spirit."

It's easy to see how his call to revolutionary action might intoxicate young souls. It is a Manichean tale, told with fervor and an eye to youth's idealism. He promises "empowerment," an idea preached in many schools, colleges, and universities. Zinn gives students a critique of capitalism so persuasive that they easily might miss the telltale signs of a hackneyed conspiracy theory. He urges students to grasp the moral equivalency of ideas previously taught as intractably opposed, claiming for example, that the U.S. entered World War II mainly to aggrandize American interests. In its wake, we were no different from the regimes we defeated: "But what about fascism—as idea, as reality? Were its essential elements—militarism, racism, imperialism—now gone? Or were they absorbed into the already poisoned bones of the victors?"

Zinn answers his own questions, of course, and he presents the Cold War as a struggle between "empires of influence." His interpretation is consistent with his ideology, in which moral and political differences (he berates Democrats almost as much as Republicans) are subsumed in class differences. In his tidy tale of how the rich hate everyone else, Zinn assumes the mantle of chief spokesman for the oppressed. He writes not so much from historical hindsight as from historical omniscience. A good historian will spur questions and prod his readers to investigate his claims. Zinn does neither, but instead makes students fearful, distrusting, and ultimately despondent about the possibility of patriotism. Instead of emboldening them to do noble things out of admiration for the great people and deeds they have studied, his book only serves to embitter them about America.

RAY RAPHAEL, A ZINN PROTÉGÉ AND author of *A People's History of the American Revolution* (2002), is as cynical about political greatness as his teacher. Still, Raphael is cleverer than Zinn at packaging his product. Claiming to identify the real patriots in American history—the common people who started the Revolution—Raphael exposes what he calls "founding myths," which serves as the title of his latest book. These myths include the well-worn but untrue tales fabricated (mostly in the 19th century) to prop up early American elites and promote patriotism fashioned in their image. In Raphael's telling, Paul Revere was just one among many citizens who sounded the 1775 call to arms in Boston; Thomas Jefferson gets too much credit for drafting the Declaration, which really was the offshoot of popular radicalism; and George Washington and his men didn't suffer much at Valley Forge. In dispelling the myths around these figures and many others, Raphael claims to be acting out of concern for the past and the present. "Creatively, if not accurately, we have fashioned a past we would like to have had," he insists.

Raphael's primary targets are historians like David McCullough and Joseph Ellis whose work celebrates the American Founders. The real danger in their writings is the marginalization of the masses that, in fact, fought and won the American Revolution. "When we marginalize common people in the past, we learn how to marginalize common people in the present," Raphael asserts. "These conjured tales" about the leading founders, "watered down and white-washed, argue against any recurrence of any event such as the American Revolution. We take comfort in our storybook nation." What we must do instead is shake things up: "The stories we tell inspire no radical views; they do no more than instill reverence for leaders and

allegiances to the United States.”

Whereas Zinn has little use for patriotism of any kind, Raphael actively challenges the naïve patriotism he calls “Founders’ Chic” so that it can be replaced with a patriotism celebrating “the people.” According to Raphael, for the people of early America, “There could never be too much democracy.” Taking his cue from Zinn that the only democracy worth having is a radically leveling one, Raphael attempts to subvert the accomplishments of the leading political actors and thinkers of early America. In his retelling, the people were spontaneously combustible; they didn’t need leaders. By the battles of Lexington and Concord, the people had already done all of the real work. “The United States was founded not by isolated acts of individual heroism but by the concerted revolutionary activities of people who had learned the power of working together.” Any action by one of the “acquisitive snobs” (his term for the self-interested white elite) was but an epiphenomenon of collective action. “Deference and reverence,” he concludes, “are strangely out of step with the rambunctious and assertive spirit of independence that drove the American Revolution forward.” Forget about the founders, then; true patriotism demands Power to The People.

A PATRIOT’S HISTORY OF AMERICA IS A very different kind of book, an extended response to Zinn and his epigones, written by Larry Schweikart, a history professor at the University of Dayton, and Michael Allen, a professor of history and American studies at the University of Washington, Tacoma. Even its subtitle, *From Columbus’s Great Discovery to the War on Terror*, takes aim at Zinn, who would use the terms “great discovery” and “war on terror” only in scare quotes. Indeed, every page of Schweikart and Allen’s textbook is full of statements that would make Zinn snarl. “America’s past is a bright and shining light,” the authors state in their introduction. “America was, and is, the city on the hill, the fountain of hope, the beacon of liberty.” Every teacher and parent who has sorted through the piles of American history textbooks published in the last 30 years will know what a rare occasion it is to find a textbook with authors bold enough to affirm the old-fashioned patriotic sentiments held dear by so many Americans. With praise for America’s founders, the religious and moral principles upon which the country was built, and the free market that has facilitated American prosperity, Schweikart and Allen’s book reads much like civics and history textbooks used to.

A sound civics education was formerly understood as one of the major goals of primary and secondary education. Today all of the controversy about “character education” obscures the fact

that every curriculum, whatever its composition, and every school, whatever its constitution, will ineluctably shape the character of its students. Schweikart and Allen acknowledge that “character counts,” and understand that history offers innumerable opportunities for impressing upon students the importance of cultivating the virtues that make for good character. This is not a quest for “self-esteem,” but rather a striving for individual excellence that when achieved can contribute to the common good.

Schweikart and Allen are not afraid to name heroes and villains in their survey of American history. Their leading hero is Abraham Lincoln. Above all other presidents—perhaps above all other Americans—he possessed the most noble character, and an unmatched political skill. Their portrait of Lincoln is well done, and errs only in its attempt to prove that Lincoln was a Christian (the quotations they adduce are mostly from non-contemporaneous accounts of Lincoln’s “conversion”; the secondary sources they use are unreliable). But this overreaching is an exception, for their accounts of George Washington’s heroism and Ronald Reagan’s statesmanship are apt (the authors also admire Grover Cleveland and Calvin Coolidge). By contrast, Andrew Jackson had poor character and political judgment, in the authors’ estimation, and his presidency was a failure. Their treatment of Jackson’s unjust policies against Indians, and their presentation of the overall problems in America’s treatment of Indians, are balanced. Unlike Zinn, who demonizes Columbus, the co-authors of *A Patriot’s History* see in the story of European settlement a mix of good and evil intentions and results.

In this careful approach, *A Patriot’s History* gives students an example of honest historical inquiry. “Foundations for English Success in the New World: A Hypothesis,” for example, is one of the early headings in the first chapter, titled “The City on the Hill, 1492-1707.” Hypothesizing helps students learn that history is an inquiry—not an ideology. Their major hypothesis in the book responds to a simple query: What makes America great? Their answer, confident but not jingoistic, leaves room for debate. They don’t just presume that America is great, they provide an argument. This makes the textbook a fine teaching tool. They propose that the cause of American greatness can be found in Americans’ deeply-held religious beliefs, which in turn yielded a moral capital that has sustained the greatest economy the world has seen. We have fought to sustain our religious, civil, and economic liberty. This doesn’t entail, “my country, right or wrong,” as the authors concede, but neither does it entail “my country, always wrong!”

While Schweikart and Allen give due recognition to the importance of popular religious history, their account could be improved by a more discerning account of the relationship of natural rights to religious liberty. *A Patriot’s History* is strongest when interweaving economic history with political narrative, particularly in its tales of entrepreneurial innovation, and when combating the usual bias against great American industrialists like John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie. The book gives short shrift to constitutional law; the authors’ conflation of judicial review with judicial supremacy is simply incorrect.

They miss an opportunity, as well, to respond more forcefully to the typical textbook’s rabid denunciation of the founders on the issue of slavery. This is particularly true in the case of Thomas Jefferson, about whom they write, “Jefferson’s commitment to ending slavery may be more suspect than Washington’s, or certainly, Franklin’s.” This doesn’t fit with their broader argument about the founders and slavery. Elsewhere, the authors characterize Jefferson’s “ideals” as “libertarian.” These “libertarian ideals” they equate with “the ideals of the American Revolution.” In another section, they identify the Revolutionary Whigs as “creating a government with an array of strong principles grounded in localism, egalitarianism, and libertarianism expressed through written constitutions, and constrained by separation of powers, legislative dominance, and direct representation.” The latter principles distinguish the authors’ generally accurate portrait of early American history from those, like Zinn and Raphael, who invoke only nebulous ideas of localism and egalitarianism. (Schweikart and Allen never define what they mean by libertarianism, alas, so their introduction of it as a bed-rock principle confuses matters a bit.)

IN 1818, JOHN ADAMS (ANOTHER HERO IN *A Patriot’s History*) was asked to define the American Revolution. He answered, “This radi[c]al Change in the Principles, Opinions, Sentiments and Affections of the People, was the real American Revolution.” By characterizing the change in America as “radical,” Adams did not mean that the founders desired to change human nature. Rather, they wanted to build a regime based upon the radical idea that rights, granted by God, must be secured by government. “The Revolution,” Adams said, “was in the Minds and Hearts of the People.” American history at its best should remind us of that truth.

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MAINLY INCORRECT

The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History, by Thomas E. Woods, Jr.
Regnery Publishing, Inc., 270 pages, \$19.95

WITH ITS LARGE PRINT AND SIMPLE phrasing, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History* (or PIG as it cheerfully calls itself) is a fiery polemic aimed at students besieged by the "stale and predictable platitudes of mainstream texts." It is not a comprehensive history of America, but a kind of thematic one; a lot of liberal icons and shibboleths take a beating, and rightly so in many cases. Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations was an unrealistic scheme. Franklin Roosevelt's rhetoric was filled with dangerous "anti-business zealotry." Lyndon Johnson's Great Society was a failure with terrible consequences.

Much of the book, however, is simply over the top. Bill Clinton, we're told, "abetted Islamists." PIG also throws in an embarrassing detail whenever it can, glibly noting the extramarital affairs of presidents Clinton, Johnson, and John F. Kennedy. (Strangely, that ripest of targets, Jimmy Carter's presidency, is passed over entirely in this book—perhaps because he only lusted in his heart.)

And then there's the book's simple-minded obsession with lower taxes and isolationism. Ronald Reagan is defended only for "his belief in the moral superiority of the free market"—as if that's all he stood for. The Truman Doctrine is derided as "utopian." Wilson, Roosevelt, and Johnson are all criticized for going to war—and not for rejecting the limits of constitutional government at home.

When PIG does stumble across first principles, it doesn't know what to make of them. Early in the book, for instance, it claims that "[t]he American Revolution was not a 'revolution' at all." Instead, "[t]he colonists... wanted to maintain the rights they enjoyed from tradition and custom." Really? Then why did they justify their independence by the laws of nature rather than the laws of England, declare their country a "new order of the ages," and abolish such British customs as primogeniture and entail... oh yes, and monarchy?

Thanks to heavy promotion from many outlets on the Right, including its being named a "Main Selection of the Conservative Book Club," the *Politically Incorrect Guide* has been enjoying strong sales, especially on college campuses. So much so, that the PIG has landed on the *New York Times* bestseller list, prompting

one *Times* editor to describe it as a "neocon retelling of this nation's back story," and another to dismiss it as "a checklist of arch-conservative talking points" rather than genuine history. The term these poor editors are fumbling for is "paleocon."

At its core, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History* is just more wheezy propaganda from the Old Confederacy (the book's cover features a scowling Dixie general). "Thomas E. Woods, Ph.D.," as he refers to himself, a professor of history at the Suffolk



County Community College in New York, rehearses all the familiar fictions: the "States had the right to secede," the so-called Civil War was really a "War of Northern Aggression," Abraham Lincoln was probably a racist and only "fought to 'save the Union'... and consolidate its power."

Granted, Abraham Lincoln wanted to save the Union, the Union that the American Founders had established, dedicated to the proposition of human equality and constitutional majority rule. When he was elected president, a minority of citizens refused to abide the results of his legitimate election. But they were in a bind. They hadn't suffered a long train of abuses as their founding forefathers had, and what's more, they couldn't invoke the laws of nature and of nature's God because they were seeking to strengthen and perpetuate a slave system that made a mockery of natural rights.

And so they denounced the central principle of the American Founding as a "self-evident lie"

and invented a supposedly lawful "right" to secession—a constitutional right to overthrow the Constitution! This is absurd on its face. But not to Thomas E. Woods, Ph.D. He says that states like Virginia and Rhode Island actually reserved the right of secession when they ratified the U.S. Constitution. Though he admits that "[s]ome scholars have tried to argue that Virginia was simply setting forth the right to start a revolution," he finds this interpretation "untenable." Of course, the ratifying documents of those states make no mention of secession but do speak of "certain natural rights." The Constitution itself never condones secession, though it does insist that "No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation," and "No State shall, without the Consent of Congress... enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State."

UNABLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN secession and the right of revolution, Woods blithely reproduces quotes from Thomas Jefferson and even Abraham Lincoln that refer to the latter, not the former. In discussing the nullification crisis that was the dress rehearsal for Southern secession, Woods claims that "nullification isn't as crazy as it sounds." James Madison was still alive at that time, and publicly affirmed that the Constitution "was formed, not by the Governments of the component States" and "cannot be altered or annulled at the will of the States individually." Woods suggests Madison's thought lacked "coherency." But then Madison wasn't a Ph.D. like Woods.

It's no surprise to learn that Woods is a founding member of the League of the South, which officially declares: "The people of the South must come to understand that they indeed are a 'nation,'" and may resort to secession if their demands are not met.

Though debunking him is fun, what's really at stake is the conservative movement's respectability and honor. As conservatives, we embarrass ourselves when we promote sloppy scholarship. We disgrace ourselves when we promote books, like PIG and others, that seek to discredit the principles of the American Founding.

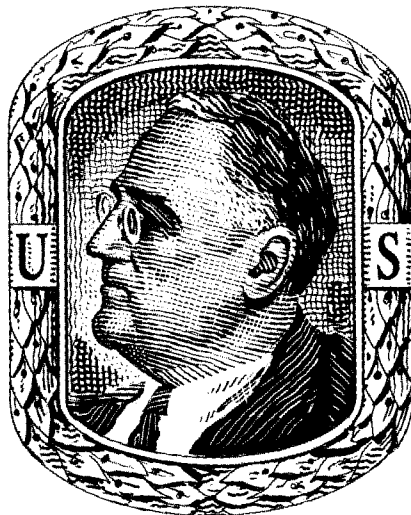
John B. Kienker is managing editor of the Claremont Review of Books.



Book Review by Conrad Black

NO BLEEDING HEART

For the Survival of Democracy: Franklin Roosevelt and the World Crisis of the 1930s,
by Alonzo L. Hamby. Free Press, 512 pages, \$30



THIS BOOK IS A LITTLE LIKE A TRADITIONAL mystery with a surprise ending. Its basic thesis through 95% of the text is a fairly standard conservative attack on the economic performance of the New Deal. It is far from a rabid version of this genre, and takes the fairly novel approach of comparisons with the economic performance of Britain and Germany in the 1930s.

The author, a Distinguished Professor of History at Ohio University and one of Harry Truman's premier biographers, ascribes Roosevelt's enduring popularity to political leg-
erdmain, oratorical virtuosity, and a good sense of public relations. The word "charisma" is employed countless times in reference to Roosevelt and others. But apart from its provision of emergency relief, he considers the New Deal a fiasco.

The surprise comes in the last 20 pages, when Hamby presents Roosevelt as a savior of democracy because of his worldwide popularity and his distinction as a dynamic leader who prevented democratic rule in the major countries from seeming irretrievably stuffy, pusillanimous, and boring, in the manner of Chamberlain and Daladier.

It would be hard not to recognize Franklin Roosevelt's popularity, which was obvious almost every time he ventured outside the White House. Three-quarters-of-a-million people came out to greet him when he went to Chicago in 1937 and delivered his "Quarantine" speech. Three million New Yorkers, half the population of the city (with hundreds of thousands of young men absent in the armed forces), stood

in a driving rain for up to two hours to see him pass at 20 miles an hour in an open automobile when he campaigned for a fourth term as president in October 1944. Huge and wildly enthusiastic crowds greeted him in December 1936 in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo, even when, as in Argentina, the regime was not especially friendly. Nonetheless, Hamby goes a bit far when he writes that Germany and the United States both had a "Führerprinzip," a dependency on strong individual leadership.

Hamby rightly debunks the myth of the great German economic miracle, inasmuch as Hitler merely conscripted the whole population into the armed forces and the defense production industries at minimal wages, substituting a shabby command economy and fervent racist jingoism for more traditional encouragements to public morale. He usefully reminds us that Hitler told his economics minister and central banker, Hjalmar Schacht, "that the first cause of the stability of our currency is the concentration camp." With that, Hamby represents the Nazi leadership as more collegial in practice than it was (the ignorant street bully, Rudolf Hess, was a figure "to be reckoned with"). Yet he trivializes Hitler by writing that he only had "probably above average intelligence" and attributes his atrocities merely to "hubris."

Hamby's effort to sell the virtues of Neville Chamberlain, as Stanley Baldwin's Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as prime minister, are not altogether persuasive. Britain clung to the gold standard through the '20s, and never had a boom such as the United States enjoyed in that decade. So its depression in the '30s was less

of a shock than in America. Chamberlain got through the '30s with a generally balanced budget and declining unemployment, but with a far less imaginative benefit system than the New Deal's vast workfare projects. Chamberlain's fiscal performance was competent but hardly worthy of the acclaim it receives in this book.

Even more precarious is Hamby's effort to credit Chamberlain with some foreign policy inspiration, not in the outright appeasement of Hitler, much less Mussolini, but because his options were limited due to Roosevelt's (and Stalin's) refusal to render real assistance in resisting Hitler. It is a notorious fact that Britain and France could easily have resisted him themselves if they had acted in the first three or four years of Hitler's regime. Hamby blames Roosevelt for Anthony Eden's resignation as foreign secretary in 1938 and severely accuses Roosevelt of a "vaporous proposal" for a conference (in comparison to Chamberlain's foreign policy of groveling even to Mussolini). This is the more strange for Hamby's recognition that collective security was the "constant refuge of the weak in the twentieth century, that someone else would provide"; a "warm and fuzzy form of denial." Roosevelt early recognized the danger of Hitler, but Hamby doesn't acknowledge that he couldn't mobilize American opinion until the British and French were robust advocates of the containment of Germany.

HAMBY BUYS INTO THE CONVENTIONAL European line at the time that Roosevelt blew up the 1933 London Economic Conference "petulantly" and fos-

tered isolationism as a result. That conference was essentially a cabal of countries wishing to retain or return to the gold standard, and to pick America's pocket. President Hoover had touted it because he falsely represented that the Depression in America was the result of international factors beyond America's control. Foreign trade represented less than 10% of American GDP and the conference had no chance of achieving anything useful, but Roosevelt could have broken it up more diplomatically.

The greatest failing of this book is its exaggerated disparagement of the New Deal. Roosevelt gets virtually no credit for saving the banking system. The guaranty of bank deposits, an inspired and absolutely necessary measure (which Roosevelt was initially reluctant to take), is barely mentioned. Hamby passes completely over the fact that the New Deal saved from risk of seizure the homes of nearly half the entire population by refinancing their mortgages.

Hamby claims in various places that Roosevelt uttered "blanket attacks on bankers" when he was in fact careful not to play that card, and in his first Fireside Chat, on banking, in March 1933, emphasized that all but a few bankers were trustworthy and reasonable people. Hamby claims throughout the book that Roosevelt disliked business and businessmen (his "deepest feelings"), that he indebted his party and himself to extreme labor leaders such as John L. Lewis (whom he was glad to have as an opponent in the late '30s), that he made war on the rich, and that the early Brains Trust had a Mephistophelean influence (they were basically only speech-writers, and they didn't last long at that). Hamby states in various places, implausibly, that the New Deal was "a humanitarian success; a political triumph; and an economic failure"; that by July 1933, "the economy was beginning to sputter"; that the New Deal was "about taming capitalism and humbling capitalists"; that Huey Long and other rabble-rousers were used by Roosevelt as a pretext to "pull the (Democratic) Party farther left"; and that Alf Landon, of all people (the very unsuccessful Republican presidential candidate in 1936), was "on the mark" when he claimed FDR had retarded the economic recovery by two years.

The author credits the United Auto Workers for moving millions of U.S. workers into the middle class, when the New Deal and particularly Roosevelt's 1944 G.I. Bill of Rights were chiefly responsible. He also claims that Roosevelt wanted higher wages but steady prices (his reflation program sought an increase in both), and that Roosevelt had "vast aspirations" to greater and excessive government powers. Hamby asserts generally that Roosevelt tried to blame the Crash and the Depression on corpo-

rate greed and Wall Street monopolists, which is "not to put too fine a point on it, poppycock." Of course it is, and no one knew that better than Roosevelt. He had no idea what really caused the Depression and didn't claim to, any more than the community of economists does, but he sensed that the Hoover formula of higher taxes, higher tariffs, and a shrinking money supply was not the answer. He raised the money supply dramatically, reflation, and provided immense stimulus with imaginative workfare programs that Hamby acknowledges gave the country excellent value for money, both in public works and relief for the necessitous.

Roosevelt unleashed in the National Recovery Administration a number of different and often conflicting policy options, to determine which would work best. The second New Deal—based on Social Security, the Securities and Exchange Commission, reforming the Federal Reserve, curbing utility holding companies, legislation for the working conditions of the coal industry, and for collective bargaining generally, and a portentously styled but fairly toothless wealth tax—was designed to protect the political center from the depredations of Huey Long, Father Coughlin, Dr. Townsend, and the militant farmers. Hamby takes a good deal of Roosevelt's posturing and tactical political maneuvering too seriously, and doesn't recognize it for the manipulative dexterity that it was. He seems to think that Roosevelt was possessed of an almost demonic urge for power (he claims he "seized" the nomination for governor of New York in 1928, when he was in fact a very reluctant candidate).

Roosevelt was flippant about economic matters, because he was distrustful of the dogmatists, including John Maynard Keynes, who somewhat condescended to him—to Hamby's delight. But there is no evidence that Roosevelt really thought that moving the gold price around or pursuing a "commodity dollar," or monetizing silver, or moving, as he did from 1935 to 1938, toward a balanced budget, would achieve anything except the placation of the noisy faction then clamoring for those policies. Nor did Roosevelt have much use for labor leaders, although he did have considerable sympathy for the working class. But he still cut relief expenditures in the summer and breezily declared: "No one starves in this country in the summer." He was no bleeding heart.

Distributing codes of cartelism and collective bargaining were supposed to raise prices and wages, profits and incomes. The codes were a shambles, but there was some tangible success and an immense public relations and psychological boost as a temporary result of them.

Roosevelt knew that a great deal of economics was psychology and showmanship, and as Hamby elsewhere acknowledges, FDR was a genius at this aspect of his job, rivaled in this skill only by Hitler among world leaders (until the rise of Churchill).

Roosevelt's greatest achievement in this period was that he channeled almost all the anger and frustration generated by the Depression against categories of nameless and fictitious wrongdoers: monopolists, speculators, war-profiteers, corrupt lenders, and exploiters. He knew this to be nonsense. If he had shouted to one of his huge meetings that the Rockefellers and Mellons and Fords would pay for the nation's distress, as Huey Long and others did, mobs would have burned down their homes. He preserved the moral integrity of the country to be focused on real enemies: the external threat posed by Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan.

THE NEW DEAL WAS GOOD POLITICS, AS Hamby states, and passable economics, which he denies, and a masterpiece of catastrophe avoidance, which he only grudgingly and partially admits. The greatest fallacy in the school of anti-New Deal comment, and very evident in this book, is that there is no good reason why German, Japanese, and ultimately French and British job creation in the armed forces and defense production industries should count as reductions of unemployment and Roosevelt's millions of jobs in conservation, public works, and a range of activities from live theater to saving the whooping crane, should not. (Pro-Roosevelt historians have generally not contradicted this anomaly, thus facilitating invidious comparisons of the New Deal with policies in other countries, such as Britain as in this book.)

The New Deal programs employed over 15 million people; constructed 550,000 miles of roads; 75,000 bridges and viaducts (including New York's immense Triborough Bridge complex, as well as its Lincoln Tunnel); 23,000 miles of sewers; 880 sewage treatment plants; 3.6 million feet of airport runways; 2,500 hospitals; over 20,000 public buildings (including 4,000 schools and the Cathedral of Learning in Pittsburgh); and over 13,000 parks, athletic fields, and playgrounds. It also planted hundreds of millions of trees; stocked one billion fish; employed 3,000 artists and writers and 50,000 teachers; taught more than 1.5 million children how to read and write; and built the aircraft carriers *Enterprise* and *Yorktown*, which would contribute as much as any two ships to victory in the Pacific in World War II.

A great deal of the New Deal was nonsense, and Hamby is right to dismiss much of it, es-



pecially some of Roosevelt's foolish ideas about taxes, even allowing for his concern that extremists not be allowed to whip up too much sentiment against the wealthy. The advantages of a low-tax policy had not been demonstrated by the tax cuts of the Republican Treasury secretary in the '20s, Andrew Mellon, and the wealth gap was a politically sensitive issue in the '30s. Hamby's assertions that Roosevelt had "failed at his fundamental task" and that in 1939, the United States was "stagnant, shabby, and wary of the future," are evidently false.

Roosevelt was already moving to the fourth phase of the New Deal (the third having been the massive return to workfare and the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938), in which, like the European powers and Japan, he transferred his main job creation effort from public works and conservation to defense production. In doing so, he put the progressive isolationists who

had been New Deal allies over the side, and joined forces with the big defense budget, pro-British, Southern leaders in the Congress. By this method, unemployment came into single digits before the 1940 elections (it stood at about 6% with relief workers counted as employed), and was eliminated completely by Pearl Harbor a year later.

The half of Hamby's thesis that holds that the New Deal was an economic failure is mistaken and not particularly well-argued. There is no explanation for how Roosevelt retained his immense popularity despite the alleged debacle of his domestic programs and tentativeness of his foreign policy. The other half of the thesis, that Roosevelt and the U.S. were "bearers of hope in an imperiled world," is accurate and is well presented when it makes its surprise appearance at the very end of the book.

Despite its unevenness, this book is an in-

teresting read. As in many books that rely heavily on contemporary newspaper accounts, many forgotten or unknown little facts emerge, such as that Goebbels resurrected the idea of the Olympic torch being carried in relays from Greece, for the Berlin Olympics of 1936.

Of the anti-New Deal books, while less rigorous than some, this is one of the most original and good-natured, has many rewards for partisans on all sides of the issues it discusses, is generally pleasingly written, and comes from a substantial and respected author.

Conrad Black is author of Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom (PublicAffairs) and Chairman of the Angus Corporation, the ultimate principal shareholder of the Chicago Sun-Times and many other newspapers in the United States and Canada. He is a member of the British House of Lords.

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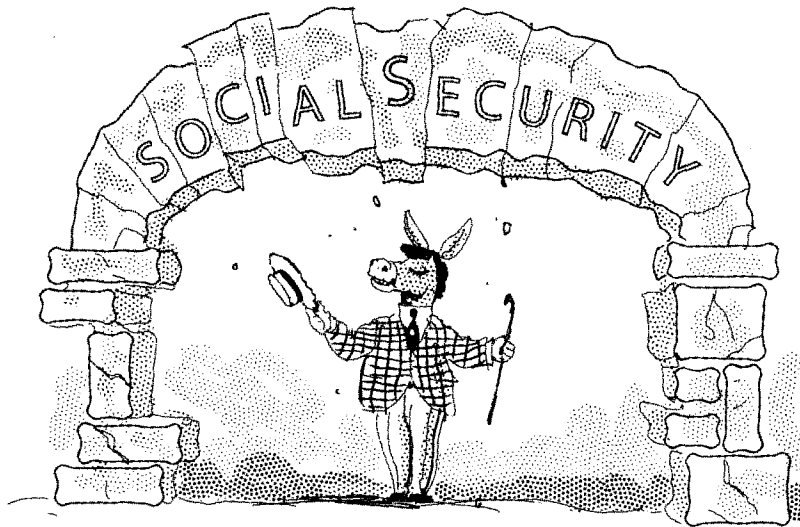
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FALSE SECURITY



WE KNOW AT LEAST TWO THINGS about the Democratic Party. First, it is preoccupied with economic inequality. Implying that the middle class had somehow vanished, Senator John Edwards campaigned for a year with a showcase speech about two Americas, “one for people who are set for life, [who] know their kids and their grandkids are going to be just fine; and then one for most Americans, people who live paycheck to paycheck.” Second, it is unyielding in its defense of Social Security—a defense that rejects the idea of reducing by a penny the pension checks the government sends to Warren Buffett. (Twenty years ago Paul Kirk, then the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, suggested publicly that the party ought to consider means-testing Social Security benefits. He was forced—before the end of the day—to issue a statement of regret for even mentioning the subject.)

To make sense of this apparent contradiction is to make some sense of the ongoing debate over Social Security and the meaning of modern liberalism. One can begin by imagining a government program to prevent poverty among the aged, one that would be both simpler than Social Security and more aligned with liberals’ desire to tax the rich and help the poor. It would derive its revenue from the progressive income tax rather than Social Security’s regressive payroll tax. It would pay its benefits according to individual need. And for the majority of people who—John Edwards notwithstanding—are neither rich nor poor, it would devise incentives and requirements that would encourage them to provide secure retirements for themselves from pensions and savings.

What’s wrong with such an approach? Wilber Cohen, who devoted half a century in government to designing and defending America’s social insurance programs, gave his answer in a 1972 debate with Milton Friedman on Social Security: “I am convinced that, in the United States, a program that deals only with the poor will end up being a poor program.... Ever since the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, programs only for the poor have been lousy, no good, poor programs. And a program that is only for the poor—one that has nothing in it for the middle income and the upper income—is, in the long run, a program the American public won’t support.” In other words, people who don’t need Social Security and Medicare are enrolled as beneficiaries for the sake of people who do. Cohen doubts that people can be persuaded to support programs to help the poor, but he is confident that they can be induced to support them.

There is cynical calculation in Cohen’s position, and also some idealism. Chris Suellentrop, a political writer for the webzine *Slate*, captures the former when he says, “Liberals are willing to keep paying rich people Social Security in the hopes that the payments will keep those rich people from figuring out that Social Security is a redistributive transfer program.” The scope and complexity of Social Security—not one American in a thousand grasps the arcane formula that relates retirement benefits to lifetime earnings—reflect something more than the old line about a camel being a horse designed by a committee. There is method in the madness of social insurance, and the madder its programs the more methodical its politics.

The Green Tornado

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO WILLIAM F. Buckley noted liberalism’s penchant for turning “the skies black with criss-crossing dollars.” Those dark skies serve a purpose. As more and more dollars fly around, the confusion about where all of them start out and end up increases. The dollars often arrive ostentatiously (Social Security checks in the mailbox) but depart surreptitiously (payroll withholding and employer “contributions” to Social Security). This contrast makes it easy for each household to regard itself as a net importer rather than a net exporter of the dollars that make up this green tornado. The ultimate goal is to leave people believing an impossibility: that an enormous but nevertheless finite number of dollars can be vacuumed up and air-dropped in such a way that the vast majority of people wind up gaining more than they lose.

The confusion caused by the criss-crossing dollars is not the only inducement to support the welfare state. Liberalism depends, in addition, on the reliable psychological tendency to treat whatever we become accustomed to as something we are entitled to. No task in democratic politics is more difficult than taking things away. As a result, conservatives have won many electoral victories since 1964, but few domestic policy victories. (Ending Aid to Families with Dependent Children in 1996 stands out as an exception; the rule is for government programs to endure and grow.) Ten years ago David Frum wrote, “Conservatives have lost their zeal for advocating minimal government not because they have decided that big government is desirable, but because they have wearily

concluded that trying to reduce it is hopeless, and that even the task of preventing its further growth will probably exceed their strength."

A further, powerful inducement to support the welfare state comes from the logic and rhetoric of social insurance. Franklin Roosevelt had stipulated in advance that any federal pension system had to be based on funds "raised by contributions rather than an increase in general taxation." According to *Freedom from Fear* (1999) by Stanford historian David M. Kennedy, FDR's advisors understood that his insistence on following the model of private insurance "meant that, virtually alone among modern nations, the United States would offer its workers an old-age maintenance system financed by a regressive tax on the workers themselves."

Roosevelt, as usual, was thinking farther ahead than his aides. In 1941, after the law had been passed and the first pension benefit checks had been issued, he defended the system when someone complained about its regressivity: "Those taxes were never a problem of economics. They are politics all the way through. We put those payroll taxes there so as to give the contributors a legal, moral, and political right to collect their pensions and their unemployment benefits. With those taxes in there, no damn politician can ever scrap my social security program."

Nor was it simply the structure of Social Security that encouraged Americans to believe that its benefits were a return on their own money, not welfare. The government's subsequent public information efforts amounted to a vast marketing campaign for the idea that there was no contradiction between the American tradition of self-reliance and receiving Social Security. In their book on entitlement programs, *On Borrowed Time* (1989), Peter G. Peterson and Neil Howe say that in 1939, "the Social Security Administration first began to describe the program to the public in terms of private pension and insurance metaphors. Payroll taxes became known as 'contributions'; the...trust fund was where taxes were 'kept' in an 'account'; and benefit provisions were dubbed 'insurance.' After decades of this rhetoric, the American people eventually became convinced that they were 'buying' future benefits with their own payroll taxes."

What a Deal

THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN WORKED brilliantly. The author of a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* in 1994 spoke for millions of citizens who had absorbed its lessons: "Social Security is not an entitlement program, but a savings system. When the government sends a Social Security check to an individual, it is not giving him anything; it is paying him back a portion of the money he has saved for his

retirement through a special retirement plan. The money belongs to the individual, money owed to him, money systematically and forcibly taken from his paycheck as security against a time when he will be too old to work." Every one of those assertions (except the "forcibly") is wrong—and every one is also a vindication of FDR's political strategy.

Thus is the New Deal both a fair deal and a terrific deal. We are led to believe that we only get back what we put in, and yet somehow we all get considerably more than we put in. The miracle of the loaves and fishes was a card trick by comparison. For 70 years Social Security has borne out FDR's prediction that no damn politician would ever scrap it. Never mind that for 70 years the government has systematically misled the damn voters.

People have learned what liberal programs and rhetoric have taught—governments exist less to secure our unalienable natural rights than to deliver our unassailable public entitlements. (We can glimpse the success of this project in the general strikes that bring France to a halt when the government is foolish enough to talk about reducing the five weeks of guaranteed vacation.) The "Don't Tread on Me" spirit is now visited upon any government that doesn't come across with every entitlement it promised, or induced us to make it promise. The insurance façade of the Social Security system has served its purpose. That the people regard their benefits as a "legal, moral, and political right" is clear. But so too is the debasement of their understanding of the ideas of law, morality, politics, and rights.

Social Solidarity

WHAT, THEN, OF THE IDEALISTIC argument for Social Security? Robert Kuttner, co-editor of *The American Prospect*, points us in that direction:

In a democratic polity that also happens to be a highly unequal market economy, there is immense civic value to treating middle-class and poor people alike. A common social security program, or medical care program, or public school program, helps to create the kind of cohesion that Europe's social democrats like to call "social solidarity"—a sense that basic humanity and citizenship in the political community require equal treatment in at least some areas of economic life. And by doing so it also creates a reliable constituency for the Democratic Party.

This is an argument from which neither political calculation nor circularity has been ex-

punged. Social solidarity promotes the growth of the welfare state, which promotes the growth of social solidarity. Kuttner doesn't ask if there's a point at which the welfare state might become too big, or where social solidarity might trigger claustrophobia. Nevertheless, his concern for cohesion, basic humanity, and political citizenship suggests that he sees social solidarity as an end in itself, not just as an instrumental value.

Benjamin R. Barber, a political theorist who teaches at the University of Maryland, elaborated the case for the intrinsic value of solidarity in a recent *Los Angeles Times* op-ed. Privatizing Social Security would, he argued, "do irreparable harm to our democratic 'common ground.'" "[P]rivatization—whether of education, housing, or Social Security—makes us less of a public. It diminishes the republic—the *res publica*, or public things that define our commonweal. It turns the common 'we' into a collection of private 'me's.'" Privatization is "a kind of reverse social contract: It dissolves the bonds that tie us together."

As with Kuttner, it is hard to know how far Barber wants to pursue togetherness. The most important words in the English language, it has been said, are "up to a point." We can only assume, or hope, that there is a point beyond which Barber would not wish to press his argument that any privatization makes us less of a public.

The disappearance of the individual, of the private, was presented for the purposes of instruction in the city in speech imagined in Plato's *Republic*. Barber really seems to mean it. He reduces a complex and profound political reality to a simple dichotomy—either we are an atomized collection of "me's" or we are a cohesive, public-spirited "we." Since the former is bad, every move in the direction of the latter is good.

Such a false perspective leads Barber to his peculiar reading of social contract theory, which cites Hobbes but is derived from Rousseau. "The social contract takes us out of the state of nature," he writes. "It asks us to give up a part of our private liberty to do whatever we want in order to secure common liberty for all." And again, "Privatization puts us back in the state of nature where we possess the natural power to get whatever we can but lose the common power to secure everything to which we have a natural right."

By making every political good a thing we have in common, Barber renders the individual rights to liberty and the pursuit of happiness both less secure and highly alienable. At one point he explains, "It is as citizens that we pay our Social Security taxes, and it should be as citizens that we enjoy the fruits of our labor." But it is as citizens that we'll be imprisoned if we don't pay our Social Security taxes. One

fears that Barber broadly endorses such muscular efforts to force people to be free when they persist in enjoying the fruits of their labor in insufficiently public-spirited ways.

Elizabeth Anderson, a philosophy professor at the University of Michigan, has put forward a defense of Social Security even more emphatically communitarian than Barber's. Social Security, she argues, is like "the Amish practice of community barn-raising. When a young farmer starts out on his own farm, he does not build his barn all by himself, nor does he pay others to help him build it. Instead, he enlists his community to build it without pay." Cohesion and reciprocity accomplish within the Amish community what individualism and calculations of self-interest do outside it in the raw world of capitalism.

Bureaucracy-Raising

AFTER THE VATS OF RED AND BLUE INK spilled since the 2004 election, it's strange to learn that some Democrats want to base social policy on the construction practices of an old-fashioned, intensely devout religious sect. Anderson misses the point when she rejects the idea that Social Security, unlike a barn-raising, depends on government coercion. "The Amish system isn't voluntary. Ever been shunned? Private associations have their own legal means of coercion."

But precisely because they are *private* associations, people willingly submit to them. This argument vindicates a welfare state run by the federal government only insofar as today's Left has embraced the reactionary slogan of the 1960s: America, love it or leave it. Furthermore, "shunning" acquires its practical and moral force from the shared religious beliefs that bind the Amish together. Leave those aside and the shunned farmer who has better things to do than help build his neighbors' barns might as well depart a community that, in any other context, liberal intellectuals would deride as narrow-minded, sexist, and oppressive.

Newsweek International editor Fareed Zakaria recently told an interviewer, "People often say, 'How could you, living in India, end up a Reaganite?' Well, the answer is, live in India. There are two things that people don't understand. One is the degree to which a highly regulated economy produces masses of corruption because it empowers bureaucrats. It just has to be seen to be believed. The second is that you are very quickly inured to the charms of pre-industrial village life. Whenever someone says the word community, I want to reach for an oxygen mask."

The benign past that Anderson invokes is as false as the benign future she assumes. Starting at a barn-raising, Anderson somehow winds up in a government office building. "In a democracy, government is nothing more than citizens acting together, through state officials functioning as their agents. It's no different in principle from the barn-raising system. It's just on a vastly larger scale that, due to its size, requires an intermediary administrative apparatus."

Her bland confidence on this point is compatible with Richard Rorty's association of leftism with "a constant need for new laws and new bureaucratic initiatives which would redistribute the wealth produced by a capitalist system." In *Achieving Our Country* (1998), Rorty, a philosopher and professor of literature at Stanford, says, "Marxism was not only a catastrophe for all the countries in which Marxists took power, but a disaster for the reformist Left in all the countries in which they did not." This disaster kept the American Left preoccupied with "Marxist scholasticism" and the assumption that "nationalization of the means of production was the only way to achieve social justice." What it should have been doing instead, according to Rorty, was evaluating "suggestions for preventing the immiseration of the proletariat...in the pragmatic, experimental spirit" of John Dewey.

The collapse of Marxism means that the make-it-up-as-we-go-along Left is the only one we've got. This hardly settles the problem. Rorty says that before it will endorse the Left's agenda, "The voting public... sensibly wants to be told the details." But the Left cannot provide them. It can't figure out "what, in the absence of markets, will set prices and regulate distribution." Nor, despite the endless talk about participatory democracy, can it begin to explain "how deliberative assemblies will acquire the same know-how which only the technocrats presently possess." The only option is "piecemeal reform within the framework of a market economy." And the only hope? "Someday, perhaps, cumulative piecemeal reforms will be found to have brought about a revolutionary change. Such reforms might someday produce a presently unimaginable nonmarket economy, and much more widely distributed powers of decisionmaking."

Beyond the Zero-Sum Game

SOMEDAY. PERHAPS. MIGHT. RORTY DESERVES points for candor. The rest of us, however, must live in the world while we wait, perhaps for centuries, to see if the Left—might someday—figure out what it's doing. The best Rorty can do in the meantime is to assure us, "Instead of seeing progress as getting

closer to something specifiable in advance, we see it as a matter of solving more problems."

But, of course, if progress does not mean getting closer to a goal, then any assertion about this state of affairs being a problem, or that set of measures being a solution, is entirely subjective and arbitrary. There's no basis in Rorty's thought to join him in identifying the immiseration of the proletariat as the crucial problem. If our own instincts are different, we could just as easily and defensibly choose to side with Patrick Buchanan in regarding the influx of immigrants as a grave problem, or with James Dobson in Focusing on the Family.

President Bush is now endeavoring to redress the looming embarrassment of Social Security's obligation to pay more than it will take in. The semantic argument about whether this shortfall constitutes a crisis, a problem, or a banana daiquiri is pointless. The gap must be closed, either by reducing the program's obligations or increasing its revenues. The president's approach calls for restraining the growth of Social Security benefits, while compensating for that reduction by letting younger workers divert a portion of their taxes to build up their retirement savings. The logic is that while blackening the skies with criss-crossing dollars is a zero-sum game, participating in capital formation through investments is not. Wealth can be multiplied, not just divided.

Few Democrats or leftists of any stripe have come forward to applaud Bush's pragmatic, experimental social policy. Yet, they can't confess that their "principle," that government must always grow and never shrink, is something they pulled out of the air. Nor can they draw on the credibility they built up the last time a welfare state program was scaled back. In the Clinton-era debate over welfare reform, we were told (in *The Nation*) that Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was crucial to "the fragile state of grace that suggests we are our sisters' and brothers' keepers. That is what community is fundamentally about." And we were warned that ending AFDC "will destroy that state of grace. In its place will come massive and deadly poverty, sickness, and all manner of violence. People will die, businesses will close, infant mortality will soar, everyone who can will move. Working- and middle-class communities all over America will become scary, violent wastelands." Show us, please, all those hellish wastelands that have sprung up in the last nine years... and then tell us why we must not make any changes to Social Security.

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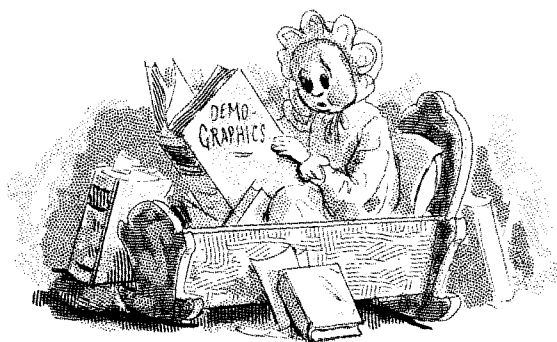


Book Review by Mark Krikorian

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

The Empty Cradle: How Falling Birthrates Threaten World Prosperity and What to Do About It,
by Phillip Longman. Basic Books, 288 pages, \$26

Fewer: How the New Demography of Depopulation Will Shape Our Future,
by Ben J. Wattenberg. Ivan R. Dee, 260 pages, \$24.95



GOODBYE, POPULATION EXPLOSION. Hello, population *implosion*. Well, not quite yet, but soon.

Birthrates are falling in almost every country, changing the way the public and policymakers think about a wide range of issues. To mention only the most obvious, Social Security reform, once a taboo topic in American politics, is now up for debate as lower birthrates lead to an unsustainable ratio of workers to retirees.

Two new books explore these changes and their implications. Each presents a wide variety of information that will be news to most readers; each offers policy prescriptions; and each, in its own way, falls short. Wattenberg's *Fewer* has the more extensive description of the new demographic realities faced by humanity, while Longman's *The Empty Cradle* offers a more detailed look at the likely causes for the fertility decline as well as ways to address it in the United States.

Although the birthrate decline has begun to have significant effects in the U.S., it is in Europe and East Asia that the consequences will be most dramatic. In demographic terms, a "total fertility rate" (TFR) of 2.1 is necessary to keep a population from declining—the average woman needs to have two children (plus the 0.1 for girls who die before reaching reproductive age) to replace herself and the father. The TFR in the U.S. is just a hair below that benchmark, having bounced back from its nadir in the 1970s. But in every other developed nation it is lower, and falling: Ireland, 1.9; Australia, 1.7; Canada, 1.5; Germany, 1.35; Japan, 1.32; Italy, 1.23; Spain, 1.15. Birthrates this low are unprecedented in peacetime societies. As Wattenberg writes, "never have birth and fertil-

ity rates fallen so far, so fast, so low, for so long, in so many places, so surprisingly."

Not only is this causing an increase in the median age of these populations, as in the U.S., but many of these countries will soon see declines in total population. By the middle of this century, we could find a Europe home to 100 million fewer people than today, and a Japan shrinking by one-fourth.

Despite their huge and growing populations, the most rapid birthrate declines (and thus the most rapid rates of population aging) are taking place in the Third World. The total fertility rate in less-developed countries as a whole, as defined by the U.N., has fallen by half since the 1960s, to 2.9 children per woman, a much faster drop than anything experienced in the developed world. This is happening almost everywhere: China and India, Mexico and South Africa, Iran and Egypt. Population "momentum" will cause continued increases in these countries for a time, as large numbers of girls have babies, albeit fewer than their mothers, and the Third World will potentially add another 2.5 billion people before population growth stops. This is still a very large increase, but it will come to an end in the foreseeable future (in some countries surprisingly soon). After that, their populations will also start to fall.

"[O]ne broad social trend," Longman writes, "holds constant at the beginning of the twenty-first century: As more and more of the world's population moves to overcrowded urban areas, and as women gain in education and economic opportunity, people are producing fewer and fewer children."

Both authors acknowledge that the U.S. is

exceptional. Our birthrates have fallen, and thus the average age of our people has increased, but it has happened more gradually than elsewhere. What's more, our population is projected to keep growing. This is not only because of immigration, as Wattenberg suggests, but because of higher fertility among native-born women; even college-educated, non-Hispanic white women have a total fertility rate of 1.7 children, higher than the *overall* rates of Canada, Britain, or Australia, not to mention the even lower rates of Japan, Germany, Italy, and Spain.

WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF FALLING birthrates worldwide caused by urbanization, education, and the rest, Americans, as both a more religious and more optimistic people, simply choose to have more children. In fact, the only Census Bureau scenario that foresees a declining U.S. population in this century is based on the highly unlikely assumptions that, first, the fertility of American women will fall to European levels, and second, immigration will be reduced to levels below even what most restrictionist organizations call for. Barring catastrophe, then, the population of the U.S. will not decline during the lifetime of anyone reading this article.

Nonetheless, we as a people *are* getting older, and this is creating important challenges in fields ranging from medicine and pensions to employment. The fundamental question for our society is: Should our emphasis be on adjusting to new circumstances, or should the state second-guess the American people and take an active role in shaping the size and composition of the nation?

Both authors favor the second approach,

Book Review by Noah Pickus

FROM THEM TO US

Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What it Means to Be American,
edited by Tamar Jacoby. Basic Books, 320 pages, \$27.50 (cloth), \$17.95 (paper)



ASSIMILATION IN THE UNITED STATES presents a puzzling picture. First-generation immigrants who have the most to lose in the process are often its most fervent supporters. Yet their children don't find the idea of assimilation particularly compelling. Government programs, popular culture, and multicultural education all reinforce the notion that becoming American is undesirable. Nativists, for their part, emphasize the idea that assimilation is impossible. In *Reinventing the Melting Pot*, Tamar Jacoby, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, has gathered a range of scholars, journalists, and writers to reassure immigrants and Americans that assimilation is both desirable and possible.

Although the contributors disagree on issues from reducing immigration to ending affirmative action, they concur—with the notable exception of the Harvard economist George Borjas—that immigrants are assimilating. Despite multiple difficulties, the children of immigrants are working hard in school and their economic trajectory is upward. While Spanish is more prevalent than ever, by the second generation the shift is clearly toward English dominance—and this in the face of bilingual education programs that seem to teach neither English nor Spanish.

Mexicans, the largest group of immigrants, are strongly patriotic and loyal citizens, according to Gregory Rodriguez, a contributing editor to the *Los Angeles Times*. Even after Mexico changed its constitution to allow for dual na-

tionality, it found few takers. The very contrast between Mexico and the United States, Rodriguez observes, makes border communities especially eager to emphasize which side of the line they are on.

Jacoby contends that America's success in assimilating immigrants stems from a pattern established at the nation's founding that distinguishes between private and public life. Ethnicity is accepted and even welcomed as part of the left side of the hyphen, which joins subgroup to national identity, e.g. Irish-American. But it carries no weight on the right side, the public sphere of work and politics.

Jacoby acknowledges that this pattern has been challenged by religious and racial discrimination against Catholics, Jews, Chinese, and others. But these have been the exceptions that prove the rule. The requirements for becoming American have been, she says, "minimal but transformative." Simply by adopting a public identity defined by individual freedom and the obligation to work hard, obey the law, and learn English, immigrants come to see Americans not as "them"—those Americans, their Founding Fathers, their principles—but as "us"—our nation, our fathers, our principles.

But most of the volume's contributors do identify challenges to this pattern. Some emphasize the decline in manufacturing and low-wage jobs, the expansion of the welfare state, and the predominance of a single ethnic group, Mexicans. Others criticize Americans for failing to fulfill their part of the assimilation bar-

gain by under-funding schools, blocking access to social support, and discriminating against newcomers. Still others stress that the replacement of a strong assimilationist ethos with a system of group-based preferences and the proliferation of dual citizenship reduces the incentives to assimilate.

A number of the contributors are especially concerned that immigrants are assimilating in the wrong way. They worry about "downward" or "segmented" assimilation in which immigrants in poor areas adapt to urban pathologies. The nightmare vision is of a rainbow underclass in which immigrants develop "oppositional" identities in response to being discriminated against and the peer pressure they feel not to "act white."

JACOBY CRITICIZES ETHNIC ACTIVISTS WHO stoke a politics of grievance to keep themselves in business, government policies based on group membership, and corporate marketers who reinforce ethnic stereotypes. But she wants this volume to move the debate beyond what's wrong with these policies and turn our attention to the role that ethnic loyalties can play in making for a more effective assimilation process.

So, yes, the children of immigrants need to learn unaccented English and develop American cultural skills, says the sociologist Alejandro Portes. But they also need to retain enough of their parental language and ethnic culture to protect themselves against the most dysfunctional aspects of American culture. Rather

than a threat to assimilation, robust ethnic enclaves can be the best conduit for it. The children of immigrants who become truly bilingual are more likely to bridge the gap between home and society.

Ultimately, the goal is to relieve any anxiety that immigrants have to make a choice between their ethnic and their American identity. Rodriguez argues that ethnic pride makes assimilation and national coherence easier, precisely because immigrants don't have to choose on which side of the hyphen to live. Paradoxically, the stronger one's ethnic identity the more likely one is to accept a new American identity. For Rodriguez, Mexican-Americans point the way toward a more unified American nation because they are entirely comfortable with the notion of being culturally Mexican and politically American.

The confident, pragmatic approach that characterizes this volume is refreshing. The realistic assessment of how group politics has often promoted assimilation is especially welcome. The history of the Irish in America, for instance, is one in which ethnically-based political machines drew newcomers out of their parochial identities into the wider world of American public life. Group recognition and benefits based on that kind of political bargaining and accommodation among competing interests are thoroughly American. And the transitional role played by mediating institutions like political machines, unions, and churches contrasts well with policies based on entitlements and rights, which are promoted as fundamental requirements of justice that are permanently necessary.

TODAY, OF COURSE, THE MACHINES ARE gone and churches and unions play a different and, generally, more attenuated role. Moreover, as political scientist Peter Skerry points out, our sense of political time has quickened since the last major wave of immigration. It took Italians more than four generations to become fully assimilated. In today's rights-based culture, activists grow impatient when the minority share of the population is not reflected in college admission rates, even when that share includes recent immigrants. In these circumstances, are there ways to recognize group identity that are compatible with a robust national identity?

Portes suggests that the Jewish community offers a good example of the kind of attention to ethnic identity—"selective acculturation" he calls it—that we should apply to Latinos and other more recent groups of immigrants. Jews who arrived over 100 years ago built self-sufficient communities that enabled them to succeed despite fears that they, too, could not assimilate. The difference, of course, is that Jews did not demand public support for their private

cultural and religious practices.

The obvious risk of public policies that formally recognize group identity is that these end up hardening those identities and fomenting civil strife. A more subtle risk is that the state co-opts an ethnic community by taking over some of its responsibilities. Still, despite the damage done by zealous advocates for bilingual and bicultural education, the notion that assimilation is best served by practical programs that link home and school is well worth considering.

In fact, the distinction between private ethnicity and public citizenship can obscure as much as it illuminates: it doesn't capture the extent to which incorporating immigrants requires building a bridge between the two realms. In the era of machine politics, poor uneducated immigrants had to be enticed into the public sphere by appealing to their pressing private concerns. At Hull House in Chicago, Jane Addams likewise recognized that genuine attention to the needs of immigrant communities was critical to fostering in newcomers an understanding of American ideals and allegiance to the American nation. She believed they had to develop the habits and skills to cope with living in an open society.

In other words, aversion to identity politics is not enough. The task of incorporating immigrants requires a more positive program. As Skerry has observed, from charter schools to faith-based social services, some of the most prominent policy ideas today depend on the existence of robust group ties. Yet I would argue that critics of identity politics have been so preoccupied with multiculturalist excesses that they have missed opportunities to ally with ethnic leaders who are willing to balance minority and mainstream concerns, and with emerging immigrant leaders whose values and interests diverge from the established civil rights groups.

The "assimilation bargain" has often seemed to immigrants more like a "brutal bargain." As Norman Podhoretz pointed out in 1967, cultural loss is often the price of making it in America. This transformation may not have been officially demanded, but immigrants have found it to be the real terms by which they gain acceptance. To be credible, any attempt to link private ethnicity and public citizenship needs to be grounded in this reality.

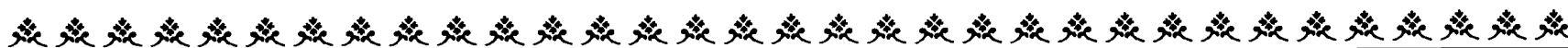
This is not to say that strenuous programs of assimilation have been welcomed by immigrants. As a number of contributors to this volume point out, the reaction of many immigrants to formal Americanization campaigns has been hostile. Yet immigrant groups have also taken positive steps to meet the Americanizers' demands. Even as the Catholic Church pressed for separate, parochial schools to protect its members from Protestantism, it insisted on English as the exclusive language

in those schools. Jewish philanthropists created a range of programs to Americanize their co-religionists from eastern Europe. Indeed, it may be that the successful absorption of earlier waves of immigrants depended on Americans' unique combination of commitment and coercion. Americanizers lobbied for legislation to protect immigrants from unscrupulous landlords and tyrannical employers. They established outreach programs to encourage and prepare immigrants to become citizens, in the process improving the naturalization system and developing the first formal program in adult education. At the same time, leading Americanizers like Teddy Roosevelt thundered that there was no room in this country for "hyphenated Americans," while welcoming Irish, Italian, and Jewish immigrants who submitted to a rigorous process of Americanization. As historian Gary Gerstle has suggested, it may well be because Teddy Roosevelt limited immigration and pressured newcomers to assimilate that Franklin Roosevelt could build his New Deal on the foundation of one American people.

CAN THIS COMBINATION OF COMMITMENT and coercion work again today? In modern rights-oriented America, it seems less likely that policymakers or citizens are willing to limit immigration significantly and pressure newcomers to assimilate. The unwillingness to make such demands may represent an important gain for tolerance and individual freedom. But at the same time, it's hard to imagine that such mild nationalism can accomplish the same assimilation and nation-building as T.R.'s "New Nationalism."

Hence the fundamental paradoxes that Americans face in reinventing the melting pot. A rich ethnic identity and robust immigrant institutions can facilitate assimilation. But assimilation can make it difficult for immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity and institutions. Assimilation best happens slowly and as a natural result of individual choices. "Assimilation," sociologists Richard Alba and Victor Nee observe, "is something that frequently happens to people while they are making other plans." Yet a unified nation that embraces newcomers requires making demands of immigrants and of Americans. Striking the right balance between ethnicity and assimilation, between the private and the public, and between openness and nationhood—these remain the great tasks in making Americans.

Noah Pickus is Associate Director of the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University and author of *True Faith and Allegiance: Immigration and American Civic Nationalism* (Princeton University Press).



Book Review by Christine Rosen

WHAT (MOST) WOMEN WANT

Taking Sex Differences Seriously, by Steven E. Rhoads.
Encounter Books, 362 pages, \$27.95 (cloth), \$17.95 (paper)

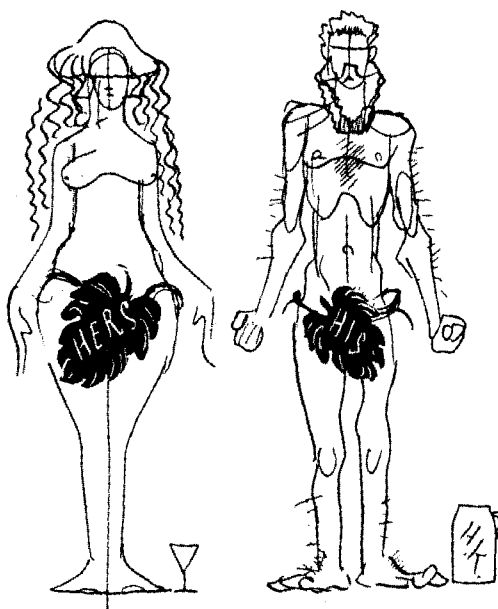
THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT is an accepted tenet of popular culture—indeed, the success of everything from reality television shows to self-help books relies on the notion that *la difference* is a fact that yields happy, challenging, and occasionally comic results in the course of everyday life. The acknowledgment of difference has also provided fuel for many a political fire. One of the phrases often chanted during the previous century's battle for women's suffrage was, "For the safety of the Nation to the Women Give the Vote / For the Hand that Rocks the Cradle Will Never Rock the Boat."

Yet amble any great distance along the path of sex differences, and you will soon find yourself with Harvard President Larry Summers, tripping painfully on the gnarled and dangerous roots buried there. Summers's provocative comments about sex differences at an academic conference prompted Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Nancy Hopkins to walk out of the room in protest. Hopkins, who now moonlights as the Ivy League's self-appointed, publicity-seeking gender warden, several years ago spawned a similar media tempest by claiming, on paltry evidence, that women at MIT were the victims of institution-wide discrimination. Posturing provosts nationwide reacted with predictable alacrity, setting up panels and convening commissions at their own universities to root out this new but amorphous enemy: "unintentional" discrimination against women. Summers's crime, in this context, was to have the temerity to state what science has long known about men and women, and to do so without worrying about offending the mis-sish sensibilities of some female academics.

It is, in this clime, a great relief to discover Steven E. Rhoads's *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, an intrepid book that does much to advance the debate about why men and women are the way they are. A professor of public policy at the University of Virginia who has written previous books about economics and comparable worth legislation, Rhoads brings common sense and astute critical judgment to the difficult task of explaining sex differences. He begins with the word "sex" itself, noting, "When discussing the lives of men and women, we now use the term *gender* far more often than sex." This, he argues, "reflects the assumption

that any distinctions between the sexes' traits, values, interests, skills and behaviors arise from societies' rigid gender roles, which channel people's thoughts and actions in stereotypical directions."

But this assumption is incorrect. Drawing on extensive scholarly research in history, biology, sociology, child development, psychology, and economics, Rhoads examines a range of evidence about the biological basis of sex differences and in an appropriately dispassionate tone notes



the intractability of certain facts: Men's and women's brains are structured differently, for example, and even from the earliest moments of a child's life, the effects of these differences are impossible to ignore. "One-week-old baby girls can distinguish an infant's cry from other noise; boys usually cannot," Rhoads writes. "Three-day-old girls maintain eye contact with a silent adult for twice as long as boys," and boys "are more interested than girls in three-dimensional geometric forms and in blinking lights" at five months of age. Children understand these differences intuitively, as anyone who has glanced at a kindergarten playground, where young boys and girls self-segregate by sex, can attest.

BUT SEX DIFFERENCES HAVE AN IMPACT on far more than our individual impulses. If you're wondering what is at the heart of our so-called culture wars, Rhoads offers an intriguing answer: *cherchez la femme*. The culture wars, so called, are really about women

and their choices, and he adds an intriguing twist to the question of why: there are actually two kinds of women, he argues, "a majority who are traditionally feminine and others who are more like men than their sisters are." The latter include women who have been exposed to higher levels of testosterone in utero, and throughout life exhibit more male qualities than other females. These "high-testosterone women are more assertive, more career-oriented, and more likely to have high-status and traditionally male-dominated careers," he writes.

Although Rhoads does not posit a direct link between high levels of testosterone and a feminist worldview, he suggests that it might be one source of the tension between feminist and traditional women. Indeed, Rhoads's book poses significant challenges to mainstream feminism, whose devotees continue to impart a feverish urgency to the denial of sex differences. So tendentious is mention of sex differences among feminists that even stating an indisputable scientific fact can get you into trouble. A few years ago, he recounts, when the American Society for Reproductive Medicine planned an educational ad campaign with messages such as "Advancing Age Decreases Your Ability to Have Children," the National Organization for Women denounced the group's "scare tactics" and "negative message" and pressured them to withdraw the advertisements. That feminists are loath to admit even this stark biological fact speaks to their determination to deny sex differences. But as Rhoads's evidence suggests, and as critics of feminism have often noted, Mother Nature is not a feminist.

This denial of difference also supports feminists' attempts to market the sexual revolution and its "freeing" of female sexuality as an unambiguous triumph for women. But the sexual double standard that has always allowed men greater promiscuity in sexual relations than women has not been eliminated; the sexual revolution only succeeded in making its effects more cruelly felt by even more women. Indeed, one of the greatest ironies of the sexual revolution was its naïve and ultimately unsuccessful revolt against biology. As Rhoads notes, "The old standard led to more happy young women than today's does," mainly because "the overwhelming majority of women come to dislike uncommitted sex." Instead of society punish-

ing women who are too promiscuous, as in the days of old, women now punish themselves (by risking disease and rejection), or blame men, or both. Explains Rhoads, "since the sexual revolution began, women have been thinking worse of men. In 1970, 32% of American women said that 'most men are basically selfish and self-centered'; in 1989, 42% believed that." In addition, "a 1993 Gallup poll reported that 40% of women were often or very often resentful of men," and other researchers who study men's attitudes about sex have found much higher levels of rage among women against men than among men against women. It appears that, as a society, we are becoming ever more incapable of embracing either the truth or the wit of the old observation: the battle of the sexes is the only conflict in which each side regularly sleeps with the enemy.

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY IS APPARENTLY not women's biggest problem; it's getting the enemy to do laundry and dishes. Feminists have long argued that women will achieve real equality only if they are relieved of their domestic burdens. Feminist theorist Susan Moller Okin, in *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (1989), argued, "any just and fair solution to the urgent problem of women's and children's vulnerability must encourage and facilitate the equal sharing by men and women of unpaid work, of productive and reproductive labor." Okin envisioned a future "in which men and women participated in more or less equal numbers in every sphere of life, from infant care to different kinds of paid work to high-level politics." To accept this worldview is to embrace the notion that the majority of women in the world are currently under the sway of a very destructive and very powerful form of false consciousness.

Rhoads sees something else: he sees women's choices as an expression of innate differences they share with most other women, but not with men—differences that make the domestic sphere and the relationships formed within it more appealing to women than to men. "Women find special pleasure in small groups of women—a preference that gives them practice at establishing intimate friendships," Rhoads writes, and women are better at detecting mood and emotion in others. By suggesting that biological differences might have something to do with women's greater interest in domestic life, Rhoads is by no means trying to toss women back into pin curls and poodle skirts. Rather, he is suggesting that we recognize some permanent truths about the appeal of home and hearth for women—they are, in some small ways, hardwired to seek it.

Every woman might not choose to focus her

energies on the home, but it is perhaps time to counter more vigorously the notion that the domestic life is nothing but a barrier to women's advancement. As Rhoads observes, "Most politically active feminists value resources and power and the competitiveness that men employ to achieve status; they do not have comparable respect for typically feminine values and pursuits." But it is not only feminists who fail to value domesticity; in a high-achieving market-driven society, the many small acts of thoughtfulness and labor that go into making a welcoming and smoothly functioning home are rarely given their due.

Beyond improvements in personal relations between men and women, there are serious policy implications to taking sex differences seriously. Perhaps one of the clearest attempts to deny sex differences in public policy has been the enforcement of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, particularly in college athletics. As Rhoads notes, the premise for current enforcement of this well-intentioned anti-discrimination statute is that men and women have absolutely equal interest in college athletics, so college sports teams ought to contain the same proportion of men and women as in the student body as a whole. Given the extensive research on biological explanations for aggression and competition—and their greater prevalence among men than women—it is impossible to argue with his conclusion about Title IX. The law "became a pernicious form of social engineering only when it became part of a numbers game and an ideological agenda insisting that the way women are socialized (rather than the way they are) keeps them from loving sports as much as men do." Thus, "only when we begin to take sex differences seriously enough to see that men are intrinsically more attracted to sports... will we be able to design public policies that are just, functional, and sensible."

GOVERNMENT-FUNDED DAYCARE IS ANOTHER arena in which recognition of sex differences might yield a different public policy outcome. Germaine Greer once suggested, "the real theater of the sex war is the domestic hearth," but today, the hearth is not where a lot of women spend most of their time. Although only 36% of women with children under the age of one work full-time, a great many work part-time, and they are turning their children over to others to care for when they do. Many readers will not like what Rhoads has uncovered about nonmaternal care and its effects on family life, marriage, and children, for it forces us to confront some of the costs of our own ambitions and desire for professional fulfillment. One study cited by Rhoads found that "young, highly educated, and occupation-

ally successful fathers in dual career marriages are less satisfied with their work, marriages, and personal lives than similar men who are sole providers for their families," largely because they feel that domestic and childrearing tasks are not being granted enough attention. As for the children, citing the findings of many major studies of day care, including studies published by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Rhoads writes, "after holding other relevant variables constant, researchers found that new mothers with relatively extensive work experience outside the home—more than thirty hours per week—produced children who at age three had poorer cognitive and verbal development than children of stay-at-home mothers." Although Rhoads's is not the last word on the debate over daycare, he offers important evidence that its benefits to parents might come at the expense of their children.

One area to which Rhoads devotes too little attention is how sex differences have been treated as a matter of law, and he breezes past debates over the use of the "reasonable person" rather than the "reasonable woman" standard that people such as Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (whose name he misspells) have developed. But this is a quibble. Feminists are certain to decry Rhoads's argument that we take sex differences seriously, but the rest of us shouldn't. His message is most important for young women, for they are the ones who need to exercise more thoughtful judgment about sex, marriage, childbearing, and childrearing. Rhoads's book might be especially useful for men and women in college, who are thinking about the kinds of lives they would like to lead. Perhaps with some reflection they might begin to see the truth in Rhoads's suggestion that our differences should not be the source of bitterness or resentment, but the recipe for genuine complementarity of the sexes. Men's "sense of duty and capacity for sacrifice will be brought forth more readily if women will say 'no' to casual sex and give them time and motive to turn their lust into love," Rhoads writes. "The idea that women can transform men for the better is out of fashion, but as the social science on the effect of marriage makes clear, it is undeniably true." Whether young women will be willing to take on the role of arbiter, and in the process transform relations between the sexes, remains to be seen, but if they read this book they will at the very least have heard a persuasive argument for why they should.

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Essay by Bradley C. S. Watson

LOVE'S LANGUAGE LOST



It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words.... In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it.... In fact there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking—not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.

SO SAYS A PHILOLOGIST—AN EXPERT IN “Newspeak”—in George Orwell’s 1984. He is explaining to the novel’s hero, Winston Smith, the ultimate purpose behind the manipulation and command of language.

The advocates of same-sex marriage have a similar political and linguistic purpose. They have pushed their agenda with stunning rapidity. Laws that confer unique legal status and benefits on the union of a man and woman have come under attack only recently. In America, the first major legal decision was *Baker vs. State of Vermont* (1999), in which the Vermont Supreme Court held, on the basis of indeterminate language in the state’s 1777 constitution, that the state legislature must provide same-sex couples in “committed relationships” with identical benefits to married “opposite-sex couples.” The Vermont legislature responded by creating “civil unions”—though not marriage—for same-sex couples. Under the *Baker* holding and subsequent legislation, civil unions were to be materially and therefore legally indistinguishable from marriage for all purposes of Vermont law and the benefits it conferred. But much more was at stake than the right of same-sex partners to enjoy such mutually fulfilling experiences as filing a joint state tax return.

In winning the right to “civil unions,” same-sex partners and their lawyers slipped the camel’s nose under the tent. Unsatisfied with the reservation of the word “marriage” to opposite-sex couples, lawyers before the Supreme

Judicial Court of Massachusetts won (just five years after *Baker*) the right for their clients to be called “married.” In so doing, they forced the entire camel into the tent, and effectively wrested control of the English language from popular usage and from the dictionaries in which that usage was enshrined (we await with bated breath the revisions that will now be required).

If all the benefits and incidents of “marriage” might have been conferred via civil union status, the Massachusetts litigants effectively vindicated a quite different, indeed arresting claim—the right to a noun. This is something unknown to the common law or American constitutional law. We have entered a brave new world in which major legal arguments are not so much about the statutes, the constitutions of the various states, or the federal Constitution, but about the contents of Webster’s Dictionary. As the Massachusetts court declared in a subsequent advisory opinion, invidious “labeling” by government is now impermissible. It is as though black citizens of the United States had won, by judicial decree, the “right” to be called African-American. This is truly a revolutionary development that will breed unprecedented mischief.

The legal conscription of the English language has the effect of limiting our range of thought. Terms of such recent origins as “same-sex partnerships” or “domestic partnerships” are already obsolete in Massachusetts. The even more recent phrase “civil unions” became antique with head-snapping speed—redundant almost before it entered the lexicon. The result is that it becomes increasingly difficult for us to view same-sex relationships as essentially, and therefore morally, distinguishable from heterosexual relationships.

Our lament, therefore, must not be for the loss of a word, for all words are, in themselves,

purely conventional. Nor should we lament the redefinition of “marriage” merely because of the immediate moral, political, or policy consequences. As judicial review becomes literary deconstructionism, our lament must be for the loss of the possibility of a natural basis for human laws. The argument for same-sex “marriage” (and even much of the argument against it) elides the question of whether the noun “marriage” refers to anything in nature. Is the thing that marriage signifies a particular concept with an essence outside the mind and control of the observer—or is it a whim subject to infinite reinterpretation by lawyers and judges?

Realists and Nominalists

ACCORDING TO THE MASSACHUSETTS court’s majority, one must “have the right to marry—or more properly, the right to choose to marry” in order to be fully human. The language of the court is significant, for it reduces essence to action, or the right to choose certain actions or commitments over others—thereby denying essence. For the court, modern psychological reductionism—“I choose therefore I am”—is the only philosophical position worth taking seriously. Even the dissenters in the case eschew essentialism. They appear reluctant to redefine marriage only because of the lack of scientific consensus that such redefinition “will not have unintended and undesirable social consequences.” In either case, the essential natures of human beings and therefore their relationships to each other are reduced to choice and its consequences.

In the debate over same-sex “marriage,” we are seeing a partial and greatly dumbed-down replay of the medieval debate between realists and nominalists. According to the realists, we possess minds capable of transcending individ-



ual phenomena and seeing the objective truth or essences that link phenomena. Thus we know that the phrase "man is a rational animal" is tautological. To this version of the Christian mind, the phenomenal world is a real reflection of God's creation and mind, and the permanent connections we perceive among the things that compose it are not illusions.

The nominalists, by contrast, emphasized that words cannot express things-in-themselves, for these are unknown and unknowable to us. We intuit only individually existing things, and can perceive, through reason, no ineluctable relationships among them. Words cannot signify universals, only particulars, and to the extent they do point to universals, they are but sound and fury, signifying nothing. For the nominalists, to claim we can know things in themselves, or a universal natural order, is to be impious and full of hubris—it is a claim to read the mind, and therefore constrain the actions, of God.

For the medieval nominalists, at least, revelation filled the gap that reason could no longer bridge. By faith and faith alone we might be aware of the order that the noun "marriage" signifies, being the order presently established (but changeable) through the free will of God. But in the absence of a guiding revelation, God's will itself disappears, and we are left only with the changeable. For the modern-day nominalists, lacking the overwhelming faith of the medieval mind, we are not permitted the *concept* of marriage as it has ever been. And the best way to express and enforce this aversion to any knowledge of or faith in essence, as Orwell foresaw, is through control of language.

"Marriage" across all religions and cultures has had a similar, though not identical, meaning. It is a rite of passage signifying and reminding us of the divine or natural order's purposes with respect to procreation. (Love or "commitment" are, at best, incidental to this rite.) As Blackstone says, the relationship between husband and wife is founded in the natural desire to propagate the species—which is marriage's "principal end and design." "The most universal relation in nature"—that between parent and child—proceeds directly from marriage. The "natural obligation" of the father to provide for his children is in turn cemented by the marriage tie. The law has the right, nay duty, to recognize "civil disabilities," quite apart from ecclesiastical ones, that render a union, in Blackstone's words, meretricious rather than matrimonial.

Civil marriage is, therefore, not what the Massachusetts court called an "evolving paradigm" (dedicated, for now at least, to fostering "stable adult relationships"). Neither can the ban on same-sex marriage be compared to those long-discredited ones on interracial mar-

riage. The distinction between the two, rooted in nature, was invisible to the court. From the point of view of civil authorities, the institution of marriage exists for the purpose of propagating the species and civilizing. It binds and benefits natural couples whose obligation is to use, and inculcate, the characteristically male and female virtues and abilities for the benefit of those whom they propagate. The fact that nature errs—that not all natural couples can have, or desire to have, children, or that the characteristic sexual virtues might in some cases be in shorter supply than others—does not vitiate the rule. Nor does it alter in the slightest the interest (and we might say obligation) of civil society to have its human laws reflect the natural law.

For Christians, in particular, marriage has meant the union of a man and woman. This is because it refers, among other things, to the unique, God-given capacity of man and woman to enter a covenantal relationship parallel to that between Christ and His church. It is a point of encounter between God and man. The rites of marriage are performed in the hope—with full knowledge that the reality sometimes does not live up to the hope—that each and every example of the sacramental relationship realizes its potential and purpose and therefore reflects the divine intention. The divine mind has an idea of human nature, and therefore human relationships, that does not and cannot change. Marriage, in short, is a word that describes something particular in the divinely created natural order, something that simply cannot be replicated in a same-sex relationship.

Residual Prejudice

FOLLOWING THE PATTERN OF RECENT jurisprudence, the nominally neutral courts that have already substituted in the public square secular religiosity for actual religion now undermine the sacramental character of marriage with their competing, profane version of that institution. There is mysticism to these new deconstructionists, insisting that each "marriage" has to be considered on its own terms, independent of the universals. Of course, most deconstructionists would, at this point, say that the law should not and would not sanction as marriage the union of a man and 12 women, or a man and a sow. But they cannot, on the principles enunciated by the supreme courts of Vermont or Massachusetts, say *why*, for the principles are not themselves rational. The deconstructionists are wed, apparently, to a residual prejudice that might or will soon give way before autonomy's incessant march. In its anti-rationalism, theirs is a mysticism not fundamentally different from the medieval mysticisms set up in opposition to real-

ism, or the Oriental mysticisms that emphasize the illusory character of the phenomenal world and thereby oppose themselves to Western rationalism.

But the deconstructionist mysticism differs from the medieval in one key respect: its complete substitution of liberal purposes for God's. The contemporary nominalists possess theological conviction in abundance: they are as pious in their own way as their medieval forebears. Impiety to medieval nominalists came from those who would purport to read the mind of God and therefore limit His freedom; to the moderns, impiety comes from limiting our own freedom.

Henry Herbert, the second Earl of Pembroke, said that Parliament can do anything but make a man into a woman. In this remark, he was pointing to the idea that some things exist in nature, and Parliament, while supreme over human affairs, was not omnipotent. Parliament is, ultimately, a human institution that lacks power when it comes to controlling the articulations of nature and nature's God—the most fundamental and self-evident of which is the man-woman distinction and the natural consequences of it. It is also worth noting that Pembroke was speaking only of Parliament, not of the far more hubristic, nominally common-law courts of America, which have come much closer to toying with the order of nature than Parliament ever dreamed possible. We can now foresee the day when, in effect, courts will routinely declare men to be women, and vice versa, according to the political pressures of the age.

We are at a precipice, not only for constitutional law but also for thought itself. If developments continue apace, we will soon have no word to express the union of a man and woman, as it was in the beginning. (Already, the young adults I commonly interact with—college students—typically see nothing "wrong" with the new, expansive definition of marriage and can't imagine why anyone would want to cramp it.) In such a regime, those of us who cleave to the notion that at least the *concept* of marriage is sacred—its boundaries not subject to deconstruction—are destined to be disappointed in the short-term. But the long-term prospect is, from one point of view, better. As the silent artillery of time wreaks its inevitable havoc on the chords of our memory, we will not have to fear being adjudged guilty of thoughtcrime because we will no longer have a word to express that which... someone, somewhere, once meant by the union of a man and a woman. Unconsciousness will be, perhaps, our best defense.

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THE ANCIENT CONSTITUTION

Rule of Law: The Jurisprudence of Liberty in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,
by John Phillip Reid. Northern Illinois University Press, 160 pages, \$32

IN THIS BRIEF, COGENTLY ARGUED BOOK, John Phillip Reid, the leading legal historian of the American Revolution, sets his life's work in context. The book describes the rule of law as it emerged in England and migrated to America in the centuries leading up to 1776, and it explains Reid's reasons for his choice of subject.

The book's title is "rule of law," not "the rule of law." The former was a common-law concept, whereas the latter is a political idea. England enjoyed the rule of law, Reid suggests, because Englishmen believed in "rule of law ideas." Rule of law meant that the kingdom operated by known rules and constructions of law, rather than according to the arbitrary dictates of the King or Parliament. In the 1650s, Reid shows, Parliament begged Oliver Cromwell to desert the title "Lord Protector" and assume the mantle of "King." King had a precise legal definition, and for that reason the rights, obligations,

and limitations upon kingly power were well understood and could be managed within the confines of English law. On the other hand, the title of "protector" was unknown to law, and "its authority rested on force, not law." The common law was, as Sir Edward Coke said, an "artificial reason," and to desert that reason was to open the door to arbitrary power.

Given that construction of the topic, it is no surprise that Reid gives us a story of lawyers and jurists. It was they who developed and managed the common law, and, Reid argues, they did so in their ordinary course of business. Simply to function, England's courts needed agreed-upon rules, procedures, and concepts. By developing these rules, and making them law in the realm, "common lawyers served liberty by serving their clients." That the lawyers had to plead before local juries across England was important, for it kept the reason of the bar tethered to the reason of the English people. Judges were par-

ticularly important, since "judges often leave a written record explaining their rulings, and they have the reasonings of other judges from over the centuries with which to measure their own judgments and to which to conform their rulings." As in Tocqueville's America, England's lawmen were a class apart, ensuring liberty by providing regularity in law and restraining arbitrary actions from all sides.

England's lawyers understood themselves to be following rather than making law. Even when precedent seemed to give little or no direction, they took themselves to be discovering law rather than creating it. So thoroughly did England's lawyers and jurists live the life of this law that they greeted Robert Filmer's idea that "to govern, is to give law to others" not so much with horror as with incomprehension. Baffled by the idea that law could be an arbitrary assertion of power, they "had difficulty understanding the new law that the theorists of absolutism were bringing



MAKE THE PLEDGE

Our country is at war, and at the heart of a successful war effort must be the political conviction that this country is worth fighting and dying for. This conviction is repugnant to America's cultural, intellectual, and academic establishments, which have (with great success) taught a generation of Americans that "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist."

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into academic fashion." Another way of saying the same thing is that they held the particular laws of England to be just. Thus did the artificial reason of the law strive to be reasonable in the grand sense. John Pym expressed the common sense of the day when he said that, "the Law is that which puts a *difference* betwixt good and evil, betwixt just and unjust; if you take away the Law, all things will fall into *confusion*, every man will become a Law to himselfe."

Reid's design in this little book is not merely to describe how the popular belief that England worked according to known rules of law was part and parcel of a government of laws, not of men in the 17th and 18th centuries, but to describe its subsequent decay, first in England and then (perhaps) in America. To that end, he overlaps his discussion of rule of law with two other streams of argument. In the first, he contends that the rise of Parliamentary supremacy in England (and after 1707 in Britain) undermined the old notion of rules of law restraining government. In time, Britons came to believe in the rule of laws—dictates of the sovereign Parliament (more precisely, the King-in-Parliament), rather than of the customary legal restraints on government. The second, related story is that most modern scholars have agreed with the new, positivist view. From the early 20th century, for example, America's legal academy—and the administrative state it supports—has embraced the notion that the rule of law is, was, and can only be the rule of laws promulgated by a sovereign authority.

ONE SEES THE TURN IN ENGLAND'S LAW, Reid suggests, in the trial of Charles I. The specter of an arbitrary king, ruling contrary to law, generated a Parliament that itself might become arbitrary. Charles I begged Parliament to charge him with a recog-

nized, common-law crime. When Parliament responded by dismissing rather than engaging the king's reasoning, it indicated that "the shoe of arbitrariness had shifted to the other foot." In practice, that development took place gradually. Well into the 18th century, Reid argues, British lawyers were trained to think of rule of law in the old manner. Reid suggests that the key turn took place when Parliamentarians replaced lawyers and jurists as the central figures in British law, and Parliament, rather than rule-of-law ideas, became the focal point of British liberty—rather than accept the change, America revolted.

The legal academy, Reid finds, has so thoroughly accepted the modern idea of law that it has missed this whole story. His brother historians have dismissed these constitutional and legal arguments as "either the rumblings of lawyers beneath the concern of intellectuals," or as rationalizations "intended to disguise and obscure what was really going on." Reid almost feels sorry for them because they are blinkered by an education that "not only has taught them to think of law as the command of the sovereign but has conditioned them to think it could be nothing else." Too many historians lack the imagination to enter into a world in which law could be said to rule.

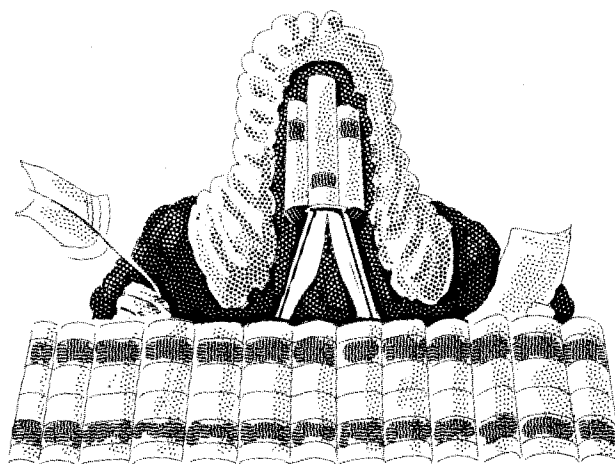
Reid's critique of legal and historical scholarship has two purposes. One concern is strictly historical. Most historians fail to understand the past on its own terms by failing to take the law seriously. The question historians should ask is not whether men sometimes compromised their principles in pursuit of their self-interest, but whether on the whole they upheld what they took to be law. For example, Reid shows that demonstrably racist judges in post-Civil War Mississippi repeatedly let freedmen off for technical reasons. One scholar found,

much to his surprise, that "a legal culture existed in trial courts that did not respond well to elite manipulation." That, Reid says, was "rule-of-law fostered by the taught judicial tradition."

REID DESCRIBES THE LIFE OF THE LAW in a community with a Talmudic understanding of law. The common law was understood to be whole, perfect, and complete—a just law for England. The achievements it fostered at home and abroad were and remain considerable. What, one might ask, becomes of a society that sees law as nothing more than an exercise of power, or, even worse, as a tool by which the few exploit the many?

Though he has fun at the expense of Marxists, realists, positivists, and the devotees of critical legal studies, he does not quite turn the corner on them. Reid's limitations, however, are born of his virtues. He is so thoroughly immersed in his subject that he can hardly view it from the outside. That enables him to explain how rule of law operated and to demonstrate its virtues. At the same time, it makes him so angry about what theorists have done to the rule of law in the past few centuries, and so concerned about an administrative state staffed by lawyers who do not understand the rule of law, that he is unable to accept the possibility that theorists might be able both to account for and to support the rule of law that he knows and loves. Given the importance of the legal academy nowadays, such a theory may be necessary to restore the rule of law, rightly understood, to its proper place in our free society.

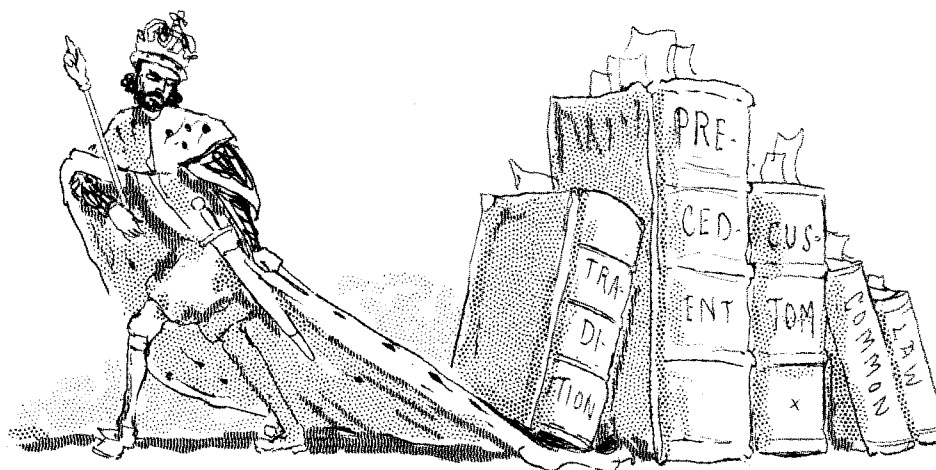
Richard A. Samuelson is working on a book, *John Adams and the Rule of Law*, and has just completed a term as a visiting professor of American history at the University of Paris, 8.



Book Review by Stephen B. Presser

UNCOMMON LAW

Common-Law Liberty: Rethinking American Constitutionalism, by James R. Stoner, Jr.
University Press of Kansas, 212 pages, \$29.95



FOR SOME TIME NOW AMERICAN LAW IN general and constitutional law in particular have been seriously out of whack. Two linked historical developments explain how this happened. The first is the rise, beginning in the late 19th century, of the kind of legal positivism usually associated with the name of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Holmes believed that judges, even when they claimed neutrally to be following precedents, were actually engaged in legislation; they ought to accept that fact and self-consciously mold the law to fit the needs of the times. The second is the conversion of the U.S. Supreme Court, beginning in the late 1930s, to Holmesian jurisprudence. By the third quarter of the 20th century it made sense to speak of our polity, in Raoul Berger's phrase, as "government by judiciary."

How did the Court successfully hijack public policy from the states and localities and, to an astonishing extent, from the federal legislature and executive? How might this judicial usurpation be undone? These two questions preoccupy James R. Stoner, a professor of political science at Louisiana State University, in this short but dazzlingly penetrative and brilliant book. He argues in essence that, bamboozled by Holmes and his acolytes, modern courts forgot the basis of our liberties in the English common law and that the way back to judicial sanity is to recapture the insights of that common law and to repudiate Holmes.

Throughout most of our history it has been understood that the federal government is supposed to be confined to such tasks as regulating commerce among the states and with foreign

nations, diplomatic relations, the waging of war and the securing of the peace, and maintaining the stability of the economy by establishing a uniform currency and rules for bankruptcy. The principal domestic regulatory authority was supposed to be lodged in the state and local governments, on the theory that the governments closest to the people would best understand the needs of their constituents. This meant that it was the states, not the federal government, that should be concerned with matters of contracts, torts, corporations, criminal law, family law, religion, and every other legal subject not clearly assigned by the Constitution to the federal government.

Beginning in 1937, however, the United States Supreme Court, through a very broad definition of "interstate commerce," began to permit the federal government a broader role. The Warren Court in the 1950s and 1960s, through dubious interpretations of the 14th Amendment, began to restrict what the states could do regarding mandatory prayers and Bible-reading in the public schools; and even went so far as to declare that most state legislatures were unconstitutional, because they included houses chosen not strictly on the basis of population, but also pursuant to existing political and geographical divisions. The apex of judicial law-making was the 7-2 decision in *Roe v. Wade* (1973), when the Supreme Court discovered that the 14th Amendment somehow guaranteed women some kind of "right" to procure abortions, free of state regulation, at least in the first trimester of pregnancy. In *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), the court ex-

tended that right in order to forbid any "undue burdens" on abortion in the case of any non-viable fetuses.

The "liberal," or perhaps it is more accurate to say "radically individualistic," policy that the Court had taken up was encapsulated in the now infamous "mystery passage" in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, where three justices declared: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." This presumably meant that if one didn't believe a fetus was a human life, the state should not prevent one from disposing of it. The "mystery passage" was repeated by Justice Kennedy in *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas* (2003), who used it to declare all state laws prohibiting consensual homosexual relations between consenting adults unconstitutional, even though the Court had upheld such statutes a mere 17 years before in *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1986). The "mystery passage" and the logic behind it was used earlier this year by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, to order the state's officials to permit gay marriages.

SO COMMITTED WAS THE U.S. SUPREME Court to what Stoner calls the "sovereign self" that it seemed to be approaching the point where it would outlaw all attempts by public authorities to encourage, much less enforce, any morality or vestige of religion. The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit actually declared that the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance were unconstitutional, and although the Supreme Court

overturned that decision on a technicality, only three members of the Court were prepared to state that the words were not an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

Holmes-bashing bids fair to become a closet industry in the legal academy, and Stoner's book complements the wonderful screed from Albert Alschuler, *Law Without Values: The Life, Work, and Legacy of Justice Holmes* (2000), which portrayed Holmes as an amoral monster, responsible for much of the sorry state of our law. Still, Holmes had a point—that the law did have a role to play in bringing our public policy in line with the changing needs of the times, and thus any theory of jurisprudence needs to provide some flexibility. What Stoner is able to demonstrate, through his careful study of both American and British common law, is how that body of jurisprudence can be used by judges, even those interpreting the U.S. Constitution, to accommodate changed circumstances without their becoming legislators or policy-makers.

To suggest how the common law might still save the political soul of America, Stoner produces a short handbook of common-law doctrines, in effect digesting and discussing the work of the great common lawyers, including Sir Edward Coke, Sir William Blackstone, and Lord Mansfield, on the English side, and the two great American theorists, Chancellor James Kent of New York and Joseph Story, a U.S. Supreme Court justice. Stoner is trained as a political theorist rather than a lawyer, and this has miraculously enabled him to write about complex legal topics in a manner accessible to laymen. Nevertheless, in his encyclopedic grasp of private and public legal doctrine he puts many law school academics to shame, and his book ought to be required reading for all first-year law students—and their professors.

One of the reasons the common law is now

obscure is that there is no agreement on its definition. The words are variously taken to mean, *inter alia*, "judge-made law," "the law of England, America, and other English-speaking nations," and "the law found in the English Reports, the statutes of Parliament, and the customs of England." Stoner rejects the notion of common law as "judge-made law." In fact, he seeks to understand the principles that Americans thought they were implementing when every single one of the original 13 states passed a statute adopting the "common law," insofar as it was applicable to American conditions. This meant, of course, the common law stripped of monarchy and aristocracy and fit for a republic.

AS STONER SHOWS, HOWEVER, THIS DID not mean that Americans rejected the moral and conservative character of the English common law (which Stoner defines as "the immemorial customary law of England, enforced in the Court of Common Pleas and the King's bench, and throughout the realm in local courts called the assizes"). On the contrary, Stoner argues that Americans in the 19th century, like Story, embraced the common law because it included "the elements of morals and ethics, and the eternal law of nature, illustrated and supported by the eternal law of revelation." Indeed, Americans such as Story and Kent were emphatic that Christianity itself was a part of the common law. Stoner makes clear, however, that by this they meant what we would now loosely refer to as "Judeo-Christian principles," specifically:

the priority of law to the regime (a reversal of the classical order), based on a greater certainty about good and evil in revelation than in reason, and on a confidence in the public declaration of good;

the infinite value of the human individual as a being with an eternal soul and as the object of God's particular providence and, sometimes, His grace; the doctrine of free will; and the distinction between church and state....

What all of this means is that if we took our common-law heritage seriously, we would come closer to the framers' aim of a society governed by the rule of law, not of judges, or as they used to say, "a government of laws not of men." We would also give up our fear of integrating morality with law, and we might recognize the indispensable role that religion and morality must play in law. Stoner illustrates these implications of his argument by careful consideration of current constitutional doctrines involving free speech, religious liberty, abortion, family law, jury trials, judicial taxation, party discipline, interstate commerce, the protection of private property, and international law.

One might quibble with some aspects of Stoner's analysis. He could have benefited, for example, from further study of the scholarship produced by some of us law professors about transformations in the nature of the common law and the Constitution. And one may be forgiven for wondering, still, whether the common-law method he endorses gives judges too much discretion. Nevertheless, Stoner's book is a model of what can be done by an analyst who has mastered both political philosophy and law, an exposé of how impoverished current judicial practice is, and a demonstration of how we lawyers might still recover a glorious heritage.

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LEARNING THE LAW

Guardians of the Moral Order: The Legal Philosophy of the Supreme Court, 1860-1910,
by Mark Warren Bailey. Northern Illinois University Press, 298 pages, \$45



READERS OF THIS JOURNAL WILL BE familiar with the argument that the United States was founded as a result of political thought and political action as just, noble, and wise as any in human history. To put it mildly, this is not how the vast majority of American university professors and administrators understand their country.

With that difference in mind, it is refreshing to read *Guardians of the Moral Order*, by Mark Warren Bailey. Bailey's main goal is to understand the ideas that unified American constitutional law between 1860 and 1910 as the justices of that period understood them. He assumes that their decisions reflect ideas that the justices had learned in college and law school 40 years earlier, and he has written a very useful book for students of American political and legal thought today. *Guardians* unearths a trove of unstudied sources—speeches, philosophical treatises, and curriculum plans for 19th-century colleges and law schools. The book carefully recounts and interprets opinions—about natural law, the social compact, constitutionalism, and the relation between reason and religion—that prevailed among educated Americans from roughly 1830 to 1910. Most intriguingly, *Guardians* gives a glimpse of a world in which the American university aimed not to undermine but to preserve and pass on the teachings of the American Founding.

But Bailey does not begin with these themes, for he is a historian and his primary audience is fellow historians. He starts with the tendency—familiar in American legal history—to denigrate the “Gilded Age,” the period between the Civil War and the presidency of Woodrow Wilson. Bailey criticizes mainline legal histo-

ries of this period on the ground that they see the Gilded Age through Progressive blinders. To correct the problems with Progressive history—especially its tendencies to overemphasize reductionist economic explanations and to ignore the influence of religion and morality—*Guardians* interprets the writings of leading Gilded Age jurists in the light of the political and moral theory they had learned in college and law school.

Bailey presents that theory in the book's first half. “The purpose of a college education” in the 19th century, he explains, “lay not in specialized studies or training for a profession”; its purpose was “to convey to the student, through a series of repeated exercises, a Classical and Christian heritage deemed to be true and useful.” Students learned the classics by reading Cicero and selections from Greek and Latin authors prepared by Andrew Dalzel and other editors. College teachers relied on William Paley and their own Biblical training to supply the Christian theology. Students learned about the moderate Enlightenment by reading selections from Locke; Dugald Stewart and other Scottish common-sense philosophers; and Vattel and other continental natural-law writers. For good measure, they learned of American constitutionalism and police regulation from the commentaries of Chancellor James Kent or Justice Joseph Story.

Bailey focuses special attention on the capstone college courses, the senior-level moral philosophy classes taught at most leading colleges. For him, these courses portray in miniature the “guiding cultural ethic” shared by educated Americans in the middle of the 19th century. In these courses, Protestant conceptions of sin

and classical notions of virtue complemented one another. Both reinforced a portrait of man in which the overriding goal was to train the higher human faculties, especially reason and morality, to regulate the lower faculties, i.e., the passions. To help students attain this state of maturity, the courses applied the lessons of what Bailey calls “faculty psychology.” Following John Locke's analysis of the human personality in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, American teachers agreed that men have different faculties for desire, affection, imagination, speculative reason, and so forth. The readings in philosophy, and generally throughout the college curriculum, aimed to stimulate and redirect each of these faculties so as to integrate them into a well-formed personality.

THIS COURSE OF INSTRUCTION HAD both ethical and political consequences. Bailey quotes Francis Wayland, author of *Elements of Moral Science*, one of the most popular philosophy treatises, to show the ethical connection: “[T]he purpose of moral philosophy was to complete the process of taking in hand a child who ‘enters the world utterly ignorant and possessed of nothing else than a collection of impulses and capabilities’ and through the discipline, cultivation, and knowledge furnished by education to strengthen that individual's character and to enlarge his potential happiness and social usefulness.” He quotes the charter of the University of Georgia to show the political implications: Without “Religion and Education,” people would become “viciously disposed,” and their “unprincipled” conduct would produce “greater Confusions” and “Evils more horrid than the wild, uncultivated state

of nature." As these passages suggest, Georgia's trustees, on a mix of Christian and classical grounds, rejected Thomas Hobbes's teaching. The right education could elevate a citizen's character, but the wrong education could make man even more bestial than the solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short-lived creature he would have been in Hobbes's state of nature.

Bailey applies the moral framework of the book's first half to the interpretation of constitutional cases from the Gilded Age. For example, he examines the decisions of first-rank Supreme Court Justices like David Brewer and Joseph Bradley, who held that law's overriding goals were to restrain and teach men to live and practice the virtues within the constraints their mixed natures imposed upon them. In their view, by virtue of the Enlightenment and the blessings of divine Providence, American law and society could provide examples of self-restraint and self-government to the rest of the world. At the same time, Americans could just as easily squander those opportunities by succumbing to materialist temptations like greed at home or conquest abroad. *Guardians* shows how these themes influenced Supreme Court opinions in cases considering whether the subjects of newly-conquered territories in the Americas and the Pacific were entitled to the same constitutional rights as American citizens.

The book turns finally to the bread and butter of federal constitutional law: separation of powers, federalism, and the relationship between state police regulations and individual rights. Bailey refutes suggestions, by Progressive historians from Charles Beard to Morton Horowitz, that the Gilded Age Court used constitutional due process to protect property and contract primarily for economic reasons, or because the justices were attached to social Darwinism. The author makes a convincing case that these substantive due process cases reflected a natural-law critique of confiscatory legislation—that such legislation corrupted majorities by teaching them to acquire property by taking it legislatively rather than by earning it themselves. Bailey insightfully interprets late 19th-century doctrines of separation of powers and judicial supremacy in light of the faculty psychology of mid-19th century moral philosophy. That is, legislatures reflected the human tendency to take action by force of will. The judiciary, by contrast played the role of human reason and, in Bailey's words, rationalized will and opinion by acting "as the nation's moral compass."

GUARDIANS OF THE MORAL ORDER unearths many interesting primary sources, and it interprets well-known Supreme Court opinions originally and persua-

sively. If I have any reservations, they relate to the book's focus. Although Bailey does a useful service when he corrects the tendencies of 19th-century American legal historical scholarship, he is still targeting low-hanging fruit. Because he focuses on lessons most likely to interest historians, he does not consider many issues, raised by his sources, that will surely interest readers of this journal.

To begin with, *Guardians of the Moral Order* has important implications for the study of American political theory. At a minimum, the first half of the book provides plenty of fodder to refute some of the most common misperceptions of the American regime. Many Straussians (e.g., Allan Bloom), contemporary Thomists (e.g., Alasdair MacIntyre), and contemporary liberals (too numerous to mention) assume that the American natural-rights project followed and suffered from all the materialistic excesses associated with Hobbesian and Lockean natural-rights political theory. The first half of *Guardians* confirms how facile this portrait is—how much it downplays the influence of Cicero and other classics, the Scottish Enlightenment, and especially the Protestant theological tradition. If Bailey's portrayal is accurate, many elements of the 19th-century curriculum insisted that reason and morality govern the passions rather than the other way around.

At the same time, Bailey's presentation raises a new set of questions about whether the different parts of this American synthesis could hang together. Did American college teachers succeed in harmonizing philosophy and religion? Could they coherently blend Cicero's and the ancients' teleological understanding of nature with Locke's and the moderns' necessitous understanding of nature? Did these teachers dodge the hard questions about whether reason takes its bearings from the moral sense or vice versa?

Guardians also makes claims that will be judged severely by legal theorists. Most law professors are not openly hostile to natural-law principles, but they do doubt that such ideas have specific content or contemporary relevance. As law professor William Stoebuck once put it, natural-law ideas seem "an empty vessel into which one can pour almost anything." Although Bailey has shown that 19th-century jurists relied heavily on natural-law ideas, he probably has not convinced anyone not already sympathetic to natural law that these ideas made 19th-century law coherent.

While many of Bailey's examples raise this problem, the 1877 case *Munn v. Illinois* is especially instructive. *Munn* forced the Supreme Court to consider whether and how natural-law principles distinguished between com-

mon carriers and private businesses. While this distinction held, states could regulate the former but not the latter as utilities, by capping their rates and forcing them to serve all customers willing to pay those rates. Illinois had passed a law regulating the rates that grain warehouses could charge farmers and grain merchants to store their grain; Munn argued that grain storage was a competitive and private business. The majority upheld the statute, reasoning that Munn and eight other owners had established an oligopoly over the Chicago grain-storage market. Justice Field dissented, arguing that private businesses should not be subject to common-carriage regulations except when they did business under exclusive monopolies created and enforced by state law. Bailey shows convincingly that both the Court opinion and Field's dissent appealed to natural law. But if natural-law principles could justify both the Court's and the dissent's conclusions, how useful were they? If they were not useful then, can they be useful now, in similar debates about even more complicated areas including antitrust, telecommunications, and electricity transmission?

ABOVE ALL ELSE, HOWEVER, *GUARDIANS of the Moral Order* raises an intriguing question about the future of American education: What would it take to construct a system of education dedicated to the same goals as 19th-century American colleges and law schools? In those days, the entire college curriculum was organized around the goal of forming young men into gentlemen and good republican citizens. Is that possible or needful today? How, for instance, would we need to change the rules for tenure to encourage teachers to take an interest in practical affairs and the moral formation of students? What "canon" might accommodate all the changes that have taken place in the last century and still teach the same overarching lessons as a 19th-century education? Separately, as George Marsden and the Rev. James Burtchaell have argued, perhaps 19th-century college education was too tepid in its religious formation, and too doctrinaire in its philosophical and theological training, to provide a viable alternative to 20th-century liberalism and the modern research university. If Marsden and Burtchaell are right, what lessons should modern educators learn from 19th-century mistakes?

All the same, Mark Warren Bailey should not be criticized for leaving these questions unanswered. He deserves praise, rather, for helping to raise them.

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Book Review by Nelson Lund

A LIBERTARIAN CONSTITUTION

Restoring the Lost Constitution: The Presumption of Liberty, by Randy E. Barnett.
Princeton University Press, 360 pages, \$32.50



RANDY BARNETT IS ONE OF THE LEGAL academy's leading libertarian theorists. His latest book is an exceedingly ambitious effort to show that the United States Constitution, rightly understood, protects individual liberty to a far greater extent than the Supreme Court has ever recognized. Through a complex series of arguments, Barnett attempts to demonstrate that the Constitution requires courts to adopt what he calls a "Presumption of Liberty," which should lead them to nullify every law abridging any of an open-ended class of natural rights unless the government can demonstrate that the law meets stringent criteria of necessity and propriety.

Restoring the Lost Constitution advances three main theses. First, Barnett presents a theory of legitimacy, arguing that laws are "binding in conscience" only if there is a sufficient reason to believe that they do not unnecessarily, or improperly, violate the natural rights of the governed. Second, he maintains that the Constitution requires courts to protect these natural rights by invalidating all federal laws that unnecessarily or improperly abridge them. Finally, he contends that the Constitution also requires the same aggressive judicial approach to state laws that it requires with respect to federal laws. Because I shall criticize some crucial elements in Barnett's argument, I should emphasize at the outset that this intelligent, thought-provoking book deserves to be read carefully by anyone who believes that the Constitution is a higher form of law than Supreme Court decisions.

Liberal political theories typically contain at least two basic principles: that the legitimacy of any government depends on the consent of the governed, and that the purpose of legitimate governments is to secure certain natural or inherent human rights. *Restoring the Lost Constitution* begins with an extended attack on the proposition that consent ever was or could be the basis of our government's legitimacy. Because express and unanimous consent is impossible, popular sovereignty is a fiction: any consent would have to be tacit, and mere acquiescence in governmental authority (which is all that most people exhibit) is insufficient to constitute genuine consent. Unlike those who gave us the Declaration of Independence, Barnett concludes that consent is unnecessary, and he maintains instead that a government is legitimate if, and only if, it has procedures that adequately protect the people's natural rights.

Distinguishing mere acquiescence from genuine consent may be a more difficult philosophical problem than Barnett recognizes, though he is surely right that there must be a line between the two. However that may be, it is striking that he does not subject his own theory of natural rights to the same kind of relentlessly skeptical questioning that he applies to consent theory. Had he done so, he would have encountered challenges that go unmet in his book.

How, for example, are we to identify the natural or inherent rights that legitimate governments must protect? Barnett's cryptic answer is that a study of the nature of human beings and of our world shows that only by re-

specting certain rights can we have a society in which people are able to pursue happiness and enjoy peace and prosperity. This blending of rights theory with utilitarianism may well be defensible, but he offers only an assertion, not an argument. Nor does he set forth the comprehensive analysis of human nature and of the world that might justify his claim that he knows which rights must be respected by every legitimate government.

Barnett's discussion of legitimacy is meant to tell us whether laws enacted by our governments are "binding in conscience." He seems to have drawn this term from Thomas Aquinas, and I would be among the last to deny or disparage the question's importance. But it has little relevance to the remainder of the book. Barnett's chief goal is not to assess the Constitution's legitimacy, but to take the Constitution seriously as a written text whose meaning is revealed by its words, and by what we know about the meaning of those words to the people who adopted it.

BARNETT RECOGNIZES THAT THE CON-stitution contains language that is ambiguous and vague, and knows how common it is to read one's own views of morality and justice into these provisions. He wants to resist that temptation, and he accepts the obligation to identify the most plausible original meaning of the text. His success in this endeavor can be evaluated independently of his ideas about legitimacy.

As the Declaration of Independence an-

nounces, and as other evidence confirms, there was a broad consensus among the founding generation that the principal purpose of human government is to secure certain inherent or natural human rights. The most obvious reflections of this consensus in the Constitution itself are the limited grant of enumerated powers to Congress, the separation of powers, and the enumeration of several individual rights.

In addition, Barnett believes, the judiciary has been commanded to identify and protect a vast, unenumerated body of natural rights by the 9th Amendment, which provides: "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." Because he thinks this provision establishes a constitutional Presumption of Liberty, Barnett vigorously objects to the Supreme Court's consistent refusal to rely on the 9th Amendment in deciding cases. I believe that he reads far too much into this provision, which says only that it is improper to infer from the recognition of certain rights that others do not exist. The 9th Amendment does not say what those other rights might be or where they come from, and it certainly does not say how they are to be protected or by whom.

The 9th Amendment is a companion to the 10th Amendment, which provides: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." As the 10th Amendment affirms that the Constitution's enumeration of powers is exhaustive, so the 9th Amendment affirms that its enumeration of rights is *not* exhaustive. This makes perfect sense because individual rights and government authority are correlative: if a government does not have the authority to issue certain commands to its citizens, they have a right not to be subjected to those commands by that government.

Thus, the 9th and 10th Amendments together serve as an emphatic, and indeed justiciable, reminder that the Constitution protects a vast number of unenumerated rights from infringement by the federal government, namely all those rights that the federal government is not authorized to abridge in the exercise of its enumerated powers. Some of them may be natural rights, some are positive rights established by state law, and some are political rights exercised in the course of establishing state law. The language of the 9th Amendment does not give a privileged status to any one of these categories of rights.

Barnett looks in the legislative history for evidence that the 9th Amendment means something far beyond what it actually says, but I do not think that the evidence as a whole sup-

ports his conclusion. I do agree, however, that the Supreme Court has seriously overstated the scope of federal legislative authority, and one effect of that judicial mistake has been an unjustified diminution of many individual rights.

Two principal sources of the vast expansion of federal power have been the Commerce Clause and the so-called Sweeping Clause: "The Congress shall have Power.... To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes," and "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof." The Supreme Court has interpreted these provisions to allow Congress to regulate or prohibit virtually any commercial activity, including wholly intrastate activities, and a vast range of non-commercial activities as well. The Court's theory, in a nutshell, is that such activities may "affect" commerce among the several states and that it is therefore necessary and proper for Congress to control them. Barnett provides a detailed demonstration that this theory is a departure from the original meaning of the Constitution, and he offers a number of thoughtful and generally plausible suggestions about how best to construe and apply the Commerce and Sweeping Clauses. If the Court were to accept something reasonably close to the original meaning of these provisions, the federal government would have a lot less power than it exercises today, and the people would correspondingly have much more freedom from federal interference in their lives.

THE MOST RADICAL THESIS IN Barnett's book is that judges are charged by the Constitution with protecting a vast range of unenumerated natural rights from interference by *state* law. At times, he seems to attribute this charge to the 9th Amendment, which I think is clearly a mistake. The 9th and 10th Amendments together confirm that the federal government (including the federal judiciary) lacks the authority to impose its views of natural or inherent rights on the states: one of the rights "retained by the people" is the right to govern themselves as they see fit in their own states, except to the extent that federal law specifies otherwise. The 9th Amendment, unlike such provisions as the Contracts Clause and the Import-Export Tax Clause, does not specify any exceptions to this right of the people.

Barnett also has a different, and somewhat more plausible basis for concluding that the Constitution commands judges to protect natural rights from state interference. The 14th Amendment provides: "No State shall make or

enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States...." Barnett argues that these privileges and immunities are the very same natural rights that he thinks are also protected by the 9th Amendment, a conclusion that he rests primarily on evidence from the legislative history of the 14th Amendment. He vigorously attacks the Supreme Court's contrary interpretation, and especially the landmark 1873 *Slaughterhouse* decision, which held that the only privileges and immunities protected by this clause are those peculiarly attributable to national citizenship, like the right to travel to the national capital.

I agree that *Slaughterhouse* misinterpreted the Constitution, but find Barnett's alternative interpretation unconvincing. The legislative history of the 14th Amendment is very extensive, and quite variegated. Although the debates in the 39th Congress contain statements that lend support to Barnett's view—and he ably marshals a number of these—there is also evidence on the other side. An alternative reading of the text and legislative history is that the Privileges or Immunities Clause of the 14th Amendment was meant to be an anti-discrimination provision modeled on the Privileges and Immunities Clause of Article IV, which provides: "The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States." Consistent with the reference to the rights of citizens "in the several States," the Supreme Court has read this provision to mean that each state must grant visitors from other states certain of the rights that state law gives to its own citizens, while each state is allowed to define those rights as it sees fit. By analogy, the 14th Amendment's Privileges or Immunities Clause can be interpreted to require each state to give the same rights to all classes of its own citizens—thus prohibiting discrimination based on race or similar characteristics—while leaving each state free to define the substance of those rights as it sees fit. This interpretation, which was suggested in Justice Field's *Slaughterhouse* dissent, has more recently been defended in detail and with great sophistication by David Currie and John Harrison.

I believe this interpretation provides the best reading of the evidence, and was disappointed to find that Barnett never discusses it. The omission is particularly striking because Barnett mentions—in passing and without elaboration—that he believes the Privileges or Immunities Clause was *also* meant to ban discriminatory class legislation. Unfortunately, he does not explain why he says this, or how the text of the Clause can simultaneously create both an anti-discrimination rule and a rule providing absolute protection for certain substantive rights.



Book Review by John Yoo

THE "S" WORD

The Case for Sovereignty: Why the World Should Welcome American Independence,
by Jeremy A. Rabkin. AEI Press, 257 pages, \$25



WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF TREATIES, international law, and global organizations that have become so numerous and so acronymic that they recall the early days of the New Deal. And it seems more and more that other nations, friendly or not, along with motley organizations and activists, seek to exploit these laws and institutions to constrain American policy.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the leaders of France and Germany argue that America's invasion of Iraq runs counter to the U.N. Charter. Human rights groups claim that the Bush Administration's war against al-Qaeda violates human rights treaties. Courts of the World Trade Organization (WTO) rule against American tariffs on steel imports. The United States is criticized first for terminating the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia, then for refusing to join the International Criminal Court (ICC), and now is under renewed pressure to enlist in a climate control pact.

Even the U.S. Supreme Court has taken to citing foreign and international rulings in recent decisions barring the execution of juveniles and the mentally retarded, and striking down a Texas anti-sodomy statute.

Those interested in American politics and law once might have ignored the world of international law and organizations. Many probably once shared George Kennan's view that a "legalistic-moralistic approach to international problems" cannot work because of the "chaotic and dangerous aspirations" of other nations.

At the very least, the failure of the League of Nations to stop the Nazis, or of the U.N. to arrest the Soviet challenge during the Cold War, suggested that "realism" was the order of the day—that nations, the primary actors in international politics, pursue policies designed to promote their security, and that military, economic, and political power are the means of doing so.

But even as the U.S. fought its enemies, it pressed upon its allies integration through international law and institutions—first on the victorious World War II coalition that became the U.N.'s Security Council, then in Europe through NATO and the European communities (now Union), and later via the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Though at first these policies may have been clearly in the U.S. interest, we should have been more careful what we wished for, because our idealistic enterprise has returned with a vengeance.

A REALIST MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT OUR competitors and allies, now free from the threat of Soviet invasion, are turning international law against us, employing it as just another tool of international politics, and a cheap one at that. But Jeremy Rabkin's new book, *The Case for Sovereignty: Why the World Should Welcome American Independence*, gives America's critics and rivals more credit. Unlike many who write in the field of international relations and law these days, Rabkin, a professor of political science at Cornell, has a deep knowledge of American constitutional history and

political theory. To him, the conflict between the U.S. and supporters of international law and organizations concerns not merely power and raw national interest, but also ideology. Rabkin shows that the current contest between the United States and other nations who would rely on international law and institutions is not just the effort of middling nations to restrain the world's only remaining superpower through rhetoric and non-military means. It is a competition driven primarily by ideology and belief.

Centuries of murderous interstate warfare have led Europeans to seek to bury nationalism within broader supranational entities, a tendency that has disabled their confederation from exercising real national-security powers. As a result of their antagonism to independent sovereign states, Rabkin writes, "Europeans are prepared to cede vast governing power to 'common' institutions, but the different peoples of Europe do not trust each other enough to organize themselves into a single state." Europeans have "learned how to coordinate without compulsion, taking over basic law-setting responsibilities from actual governments without any of the threatening aspects of state power." In effect, Europeans attribute their postwar success to international law and institutions, not the aid and protection of the U.S., and thus want to export the former, and restrain the latter, everywhere. Rabkin notes that Europe "is already so diverse, it can see its governance techniques as almost universal—or as an embryo of a pattern of governance that can be global."

But European-style global governance con-

flicts fundamentally with the principle of national sovereignty. Drawing expertly on the framers' thinking, Rabkin defines sovereignty as a government's "capacity to enforce" its wishes over a defined territory, its ability to protect its people against outside invasion, and a people's "control of force" by the government. "Sovereignty appeared as a way of ordering and constraining political life," Rabkin argues. "It insisted that law and force must be joined, and that power to command must be linked with the power to protect—especially against outsiders." The framers enshrined this understanding in the Constitution by creating a federal government of limited, enumerated, and separated powers that could provide for the common defense, but that did not answer to any legal authority higher than the American people. To Rabkin, the Constitution is the very expression, if not perfection, of sovereignty.

ADVOCATES OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE believe that sovereignty, particularly of the American kind, stands in the way of more effective world cooperation and harmony. Louis Henkin, the dean of American international law professors, has even called on scholars to banish sovereignty as the "S word." For Rabkin, such ideas are dangerously utopian. American military and economic power, not international law and institutions, defeated Germany and Japan in World War II, attained victory over the Soviet Union in the Cold War, sponsored the peaceful spread of democracy to Europe and Asia, and ended human rights abuses from Haiti to Iraq. People can find security only in sovereign states—which draw their political legitimacy from the protection they provide—not in international organizations like the United Nations, which lacks an army and whose actions are subject to the vetoes of France, Russia, and China. If the U.S. were to place its security in the U.N.'s hands, not only would it lose its national character, Rabkin suggests, but the world would suffer, too.

Instead, Rabkin offers a distinctively American suggestion for foreign policy. On the one hand, "internationalists" believe the U.S. should wield its influence to build durable international organizations that will outlast its own predominance. Many if not most international law professors, and more than a few officials in the State Department bureaucracy, fall into this camp. On the other hand, "imperialists" want the U.S. to use its power to reorder the world for our own and the world's benefit. It might not be wrong to count William Kristol and Robert Kagan in this camp, along with the writers of President Bush's Second Inaugural address. Rabkin, however, suggests a third path, one built upon the Declaration

of Independence and the Constitution. These documents, which create for Rabkin the principle of "constitutional integrity," prevent any international law, commitment, or institution from exercising authority superior to our founding documents.

If international law or institutions were permitted to become a policy-making forum, the American people would lose their connection to their government and its founding principles. We would no longer be a nation. For this reason, Rabkin writes, "The United States needs to safeguard its sovereignty in order to safeguard its own form of government. It is not simply a matter of legal technicalities. It is about preserving a structure under which Americans—in all their diversity, with all their rights, and all their differences of opinion—can live together in confidence and mutual respect, as fellow citizens of the same solid republic." So, Rabkin seems to say to our diplomats, cooperate all you like, but always remember that the United States, because of the primacy of its Constitution, has the right to ignore international law or withdraw from its institutions.

Although Rabkin probably would not view things this way, we can understand the conflict between the Constitution and international cooperation by returning to a similar struggle—that of the New Deal. As the standard account goes, constitutional law at the turn of the last century remained stuck in a pre-nationalized, agrarian economy. The national government did not have the constitutional authority to regulate the economy in regard to unemployment, poverty, or the conditions of labor. This understanding was shared by the Supreme Court, which still followed the *Lochner* case, which prevented regulation of wages and hours, and the *Child Labor Cases*, which limited federal control to interstate commerce. The view was also shared by the Democratic Party.

In response to the Great Depression, FDR and the Democrats swept into office and enacted a national recovery program, which established the modern regulatory state: broad federal power to manage the national economy, including legislative power delegated to independent agencies effectively removed from political control. In 1934-35, the Supreme Court resisted this new approach and invalidated several New Deal statutes. But, emboldened by a landslide victory in the 1936 elections, Roosevelt responded with his famous court-packing plan, attempting to change the Supreme Court's direction by expanding its size. In the "switch in time that saved nine," the Court reversed course and approved the basic elements of the New Deal state.

The justices had acted in a politically astute, but legally unprincipled, manner in order to

avoid political damage to the Court, permitting a bloodless constitutional revolution without constitutional amendments. Because of the Court's blatantly political change in doctrine, the New Deal's legitimacy remained questionable, especially to those who wished to restrict the Commerce Clause, like Justice Clarence Thomas, or to those who believed that elements of the administrative state were unconstitutional, like Justice Antonin Scalia.

GLOBALIZATION TODAY PRESENTS THE same challenges, and raises the same constitutional questions, as nationalization did a century ago. More than just the spread of market capitalism throughout the world, globalization is an acceleration in the speed of communications, computer networks, and transportation systems that makes possible the global dissemination of news, political concepts, and values. Like nationalization, globalization has good and bad effects. It can lower prices and raise living standards, but it also can allow problems to spread quickly to a global level. Epidemics, crime, transboundary pollution, and illegal trafficking in drugs or human beings all may arise from globalization. To take a concrete example, the September 11 hijackings would have been impossible without the easy international movement of people and money.

Just as the economy's nationalization created demand for federal regulation, so globalization has increased the desire for governance at the international level. The WTO, for instance, reduces national trade barriers in much the same way that the "dormant commerce clause" freed interstate trade from state restrictions. International environmental regulations seek to address the negative externalities of pollution or species extinction in the same way federal statutes do.

To achieve these ends, international regulation has mirrored the legal foundations of the regulatory state: expanded jurisdiction and independent, supposedly neutral, institutions. The Kyoto accords would limit all energy use, whether subject to congressional or state regulation. Human rights conventions hold both federal and state officials liable to standards that meet or exceed constitutional requirements. Whether regulation occurs under the Treaty or the Commerce Clause, the constitutional questions remain the same: What is the appropriate scope of federal power? What relationship must private conduct have with the subjects of public regulation? How do we respect the reserved powers of the states?

Congress has delegated substantial legislative authority to administrative agencies, which are shielded in various ways from direct presidential control. But such agencies are of doubtful consti-

tutionality precisely because of these attributes. Only by maintaining a non-delegation doctrine and making all executive officers responsible to the president could the administrative state be rendered democratically accountable and consistent with the separation of powers. International organizations, intended to address similar problems, raise the same issues. The WTO, ICC, and International Court of Justice (ICJ) suffer from accountability problems and democracy-deficits precisely because they are designed to be neutral and independent of the control of any nation or nations.

This is not to argue that all such institutions

possess these faults, or that all international regulatory agreements violate the Constitution. Indeed, many of these efforts were initially proposed by the U.S. But it points to the need to begin the larger task of developing constitutional doctrines that will allow the U.S. to participate in international bodies and laws where these provide distinct benefits.

Much of Rabkin's book argues that the benefits of global governance are a fraud, even as historical and economic scholarship has questioned whether the New Deal really had much to do with ending the Great Depression. Nonetheless, it seems clear that international

cooperation does benefit the U.S., although certainly not in the exaggerated ways claimed by its champions. Sometimes despite itself, *The Case for Sovereignty* starts us on the path to understanding how we can regulate globalization consistent with the Constitution. Armed with a better understanding of the Constitution, perhaps we will arrive at more principled answers than the ones improvised in the New Deal almost 70 years ago.

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Book Review by Fred I. Greenstein

MORE WITH LESS

My Life, by Bill Clinton. Alfred A. Knopf, 957 pages, \$35

WHEN A COLLEAGUE OF MINE WAS the last of a lengthy series of speakers at a scholarly forum, he complained of being the victim of "anticipatory plagiarism." So it is with me, writing in 2005 a review of Bill Clinton's autobiography, about which most reviewers had their say at the time of its publication in the summer of 2004. Rolling with the punch, let me point out briefly where earlier commentators are indebted by anticipation, before proceeding to the matter that is most relevant to assessing a former president's White House memoir—whether and in what ways it adds to what is known about his presidency.

Like many of the early reviewers, I am charmed by Clinton's affectionate evocation of his Southern roots. His account of the Arkansas in which he grew up is warm, vivid, and rich in local color. His portraits of the members of his family are lovingly drawn. He takes particular delight in describing such gustatory pleasures as watermelon-eating contests and country meals in which sweet potatoes, cornbread, and collard greens are dished up. Clinton's early chapters on Arkansas have a fluency that disappears as the book proceeds.

I join the early reviewers in being struck by the extent of Clinton's preoccupation with his own psyche. Other presidential memoirs illuminate the personal qualities of their writers, but none with the clinical specificity of

Clinton's. As has often been recounted, Clinton grew up in the home of his abusively alcoholic stepfather. Like other children in the families of alcoholics, he learned to compartmentalize his public and private selves. He put it this way in a telling high school composition from which he quotes in chapter seven: "I am a person motivated and influenced by so many diverse forces I sometimes question the sanity of my existence. I am a living paradox—deeply religious, yet not as convinced of my actual beliefs as I ought to be; wanting responsibility yet shirking from it; loving the truth but often times giving way to falsity.... I detest selfishness, but see it in the mirror every day." Clinton is still exploring the topic of his own inner workings in chapter 49, where he writes about what he learned in the couples' therapy he and Hillary entered into following the Monica Lewinsky revelation: "I came to understand that when I was exhausted, angry, or feeling isolated and alone, I was more vulnerable to making selfish and self-destructive personal mistakes about which I would later be ashamed. The current controversy was the latest casualty of my lifelong effort to lead parallel lives, to wall off my anger and grief and get on with my other life, which I loved and lived well."

I also concur with those who find *My Life* prolix, disorganized, and far longer than it needed to be for Clinton to tell his story. The

book consists of 55 untitled chapters, followed by a three-and-a-half page epilogue. (There is no table of contents and the index is barely adequate.) Whereas previous ex-presidents organized their memoirs thematically, Clinton's narrative is strictly chronological. The readers interested in a matter that unfolded over an extended period must therefore piece an account together from many chapters. The difficulty in mining the book is compounded by the innumerable anecdotes that punctuate its pages. Clinton pauses to remark on each course he took in college and law school, his favorite restaurants and what they served, the names of his grade school teachers, and much else that has little general interest. He also peppers his text with asides, at one point breaking off a discussion of how he fulfilled his responsibilities as commander-in-chief to mention a visit he made to view the pandas at the National Zoo. Making one's way through *My Life* is like taking a lengthy road trip on a highway studded with traffic humps.

Finally, I agree with the *New York Times's* Michiko Kakutani, who describes the book as "a mirror of Mr. Clinton's presidency: lack of discipline leading to squandered opportunities; high expectations, undermined by self-indulgence, and scattered concentration." But how well does *My Life* mirror events of Clinton's time in the White House?



CLINTON'S PRESIDENCY, IT WILL BE remembered, was marked by a cycle of troubled periods, resulting in part from his own lack of discipline, and recoveries made possible by his resiliency, coolness under pressure, and political skill. The first alternation began before he took office. Clinton won praise early in the post-election transition by declaring that he intended to focus on the economy "like a laser beam" and for his display of economic sophistication at a conference he convened on the nation's finances, but the glow was gone by inauguration day.

Clinton staffed his White House with former campaign aides who lacked Washington experience and was slow to name cabinet nominees. His first candidate for attorney general withdrew from consideration after it came out that she had employed a pair of illegal aliens and failed to pay their Social Security taxes. It was not until February 11 that Clinton succeeded in nominating his eventual appointee. Also politically costly was the gays-in-the-military misadventure in which Clinton triggered an onslaught of protest by declaring his intention to open the military to homosexuals and then beat a retreat. By Clinton's 100th day, Congress had defeated his signature economic stimulus bill and there had been a number of additional contretemps. A Gallup poll found Clinton's approval level to have dropped from 58% at the start of his presidency to 38%.

Clinton then displayed his trademark capacity for self-correction. He strengthened his White House staff and took on the Washington-wise veteran Republican White House aide David Gergen as an advisor. By the end of 1993, Clinton had made a stunning presentation of his health-care proposal to a joint session of Congress, brokered passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and presided over the signing of a peace accord with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. He was back in public favor—for the moment.

The following year was to see new and more severe difficulties. After a barrage of allegations of wrongdoing in connection with the Whitewater real estate venture in which Clinton and his wife had invested, he requested that an independent counsel be appointed to investigate the matter. Before long, the original counsel was replaced by the zealous Kenneth Starr, who was to become Clinton's nemesis in 1998. More damaging at the time was the lingering death of his proposal for sweeping reform of the nation's health care system. The campaign to enact the measure was a casebook instance of political mismanagement.

Clinton took the controversial action of entrusting its framing to a task force directed by his wife. The task force drew fire by convening in secret and not revealing the names of its members. It failed to consult with Congress and the affected interests, and it came forth with an intricate, difficult-to-explain bill, which it reported well after a self-imposed deadline, affording time for opposition to mobilize. In late August, the proposal died in committee. By then the proportion of the public expressing approval of Clinton's handling of his responsibilities was down from 58% in January to 39%.

The 1994 election was a disaster for the Clinton Administration. The GOP seized control of Congress, gaining 52 seats in the House and eight in the Senate. The master-



mind of the sweep, Newt Gingrich, had persuaded his fellow House Republicans to commit themselves to a "Contract with America," an extensive list of conservative proposals. When the new Congress convened, Gingrich was elected Speaker of the House. He went on to preside over House passage of all but one of the proposals, celebrating the triumph in a prime-time address. Clinton was reduced to insisting that he had not become politically superfluous, because "the Constitution makes me relevant."

Clinton soon proved to be more than merely relevant. On April 19, there was a terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The blast killed 168 people. On April 23, Clinton flew to the

bombing site and delivered a moving eulogy to the victims. A poll reported in *Time* shortly thereafter found that his public support had risen from 49% to 60%. Next it was Gingrich's turn to miscalculate. He pushed through sharp spending cuts on the environment, education, and healthcare. Clinton went on to veto the spending legislation in which they were contained, and the federal government was compelled to shut down most of its activities. The public was deprived of the needed services, and Gingrich fell into deep disfavor. Clinton then began to advance such traditionally Republican policies as stiffer criminal sentences and efforts to combat teen pregnancy and put more police officers on the streets. In a final act of repositioning, he signed a sweeping welfare reform act.

The culminating event in Clinton's political recovery was his 1996 reelection victory in a three-way contest with Bob Dole and Ross Perot. He launched his second-term with a call for a government that "lives within its means, and does more with less," setting out an extensive list of attractive low-price-tag initiatives. Buoyed by attractive proposals and a booming economy, Clinton's 1997 approval levels were the highest to date of his presidency.

Then came the year of Monica Lewinsky. And impeachment. On December 19, 1998, Clinton became the first elected president to be impeached, but the victory of his opponents proved to be pyrrhic. In the first opinion poll after impeachment, 73% of the public expressed approval of his conduct of the presidency, although polls also indicated that the public viewed his personal comportment with disfavor. By then, the astonishing outcome of the off-year election was known. Democratic strength in the House had increased by five, the first midterm gain by a president's party since 1934. Clinton proposed additional initiatives in 1999, but there was little interest on Capitol Hill in the program of a lame-duck chief executive. Turning to international peacemaking, he came within a hair of brokering a Middle East peace agreement, but at the last minute the negotiations broke down. In his final month in the White House, Clinton went into high gear, short-circuiting the normal review process to issue a spate of pardons and executive orders. The messiness of the end of his presidency echoed that of its beginning.

THIS IS THE STORY AS IT WAS KNOWN when Clinton's memoir was published. What has *My Life* added, and can it be taken on face value? The book provides no major revelations. Because it is so lengthy and cluttered, its narrative thread does not stand out,

but it can be productively mined for new details. All such works must be read with caution, but memoirs can be instructive for what they exclude, as well as include, and for the insight they furnish into how their writers wish to be remembered. We might find such instruction in two very different examples of Clinton's emphases and omissions—a brief encounter with a journalist that illuminates his administration's troubled relations with the press and the two-year saga of his ambitious effort to guarantee healthcare to all Americans.

On June 13, 1993, Clinton assembled the White House press corps to announce the nomination of Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Supreme Court. There had been intense speculation about how he proposed to fill a vacancy opened by the retirement of Justice Byron White. All signals pointed to a candidate Clinton did later name to the court—Stephen Breyer. His choice of Ginsburg came as a surprise. Clinton opened with a statement praising Ginsburg and announcing his intention to appoint her. Ginsburg followed, expressing her gratitude to Clinton and the satisfaction she derived at the advances women have made in law in the years since she became an attorney.

When the time came for questions, Clinton recognized Brit Hume, then ABC's White House correspondent. Hume remarked that Clinton had seemed about to nominate Breyer rather than Ginsburg, and he alluded to Clinton's recent withdrawal of his nomination of Lani Guinier to the Justice Department. Could he account for the seeming "zig-zag quality" of his decision-making, Hume asked. Clinton reports his reply in *My Life*. Taking objection

to the question, Clinton deplored the tendency of the press to ignore the substance of actions and focus on the process that produced them. But Clinton makes no mention of what he did next. Grimacing angrily, he turned his back to the audience and stormed away, providing irresistible footage for the evening news. Clinton devotes many pages of his memoir to lamenting the unflattering coverage of his administration by the media, but he fails to dwell on his own complicity in its depiction.

THE UNITED STATES IS THE ONLY advanced industrial nation that does not guarantee healthcare to its entire population. In the early months of the Clinton presidency, it was widely held that this historical anomaly was about to be eliminated, whether through Clinton's proposal or some alternative. No alternative proved acceptable to the administration, and Clinton's plan never reached the floor of Congress. Important lessons can be derived from this monumental failure, but not from *My Life*. To begin with, the strict chronology of the book's narrative makes a systematic account of any topic virtually impossible. Clinton deals with his initiative in two-dozen brief passages scattered across 10 full chapters. Even if the passages added up to an adequate account, few readers would succeed in fitting the story together. In fact, they do not.

Despite his reputation for immersing himself in the detailed content of policies, Clinton says little about the specifics of his proposal, much less of the alternatives that were proposed to it. He makes only cursory reference to the debates among his advisors about how best to advance

the proposal and none to his periodic changes of position. He does briefly discuss the debate among the proposal's supporters about whether to include it in the budget reconciliation process or report it as a separate bill, but makes one of his main points in a mind-numbing locution: "To provide universal coverage, we had either to include a provision for backup price controls in the plan, raise taxes and cut other spending even further, or reduce the deficit target, which might adversely affect our strategy to lower interest rates." He does acknowledge that his appointment of Mrs. Clinton to head the effort was controversial. But he does not mention a particularly compelling reason for the criticism—that advisors who had reservations about the direction the reform was taking would be inhibited about taking on the president's wife. All told, Clinton's treatment of this and larger topics compares unfavorably with similar discussions in earlier presidential memoirs.

The final chapters of *My Life*, much like the final month of the Clinton presidency, are particularly ragged, evidently because Clinton was submitting hand written pages to the end. One winds up asking of the book, as of the presidency, "Why could he not have done better?"

Fred I. Greenstein is professor of politics emeritus at Princeton University and the author of many books on personality and politics and the American presidency, including *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (HarperCollins) and most recently *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style From FDR to George W. Bush* (Free Press).

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Essay by Hans L. Eicholz

A REVOLUTIONARY HISTORIAN

THE 19TH-CENTURY HOPE OF "SCIENTIFIC history" encouraged scholars to assume the imminence of a unified historical narrative. It was not to be. While the methods of data collection and our knowledge of man's physical and environmental condition have grown exponentially, the picture of the past has become more complicated and less amenable to synthesis, which has produced not a single unified discipline but a variety of social, economic, cultural, political, and intellectual histories.

Amid this jumble, histories that are too neat and clean, where variables are few and outcomes overdetermined, are patently suspect. We recoil at explanations that present the unflattering picture of human beings as puppets moved by systemic imperatives. Choices exist within, and among, systems. The best histories recognize this complexity, and attempt to proportion their explanations accordingly. Historian of finance Fritz Redlich once observed that mankind possesses free will within a determined universe. From this, he could never accept that "there is a difference between the description of a life and that of a historical process." In other words, to understand how change and continuity operate, we need to understand how historical individuals make choices.

Over the long course of his professional career, Bernard Bailyn has set himself the difficult task of explaining the relation of individual choices to the social, physical, and political environment of colonial and revolutionary America. His career has produced wonderful narratives, powerful descriptions, convincing interpretations. Always daring, he has not always succeeded. Attempting to combine biography and structural analysis takes him to the limits of historical explanation.

Bailyn has spent his career at Harvard University, where he earned his Ph.D. in 1953. He served as Winthrop Professor of History from 1966 until 1981, when he was appointed Adams University Professor. His works range from the history of education to historical methodology, but his most noted projects are in the field of early American intellectual and cultural history. His *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* won both the Pulitzer and Bancroft prizes in 1968. In 1975, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*

received a National Book Award, and in 1987 Bailyn attained his second Pulitzer for *Voyagers to the West*. Now a professor emeritus, he continues actively to pursue his interests in American history, and in 2001 was awarded the Bruce Catton Prize (for his lifetime achievement) by the Society of American Historians. By recalling the most significant productions of this prolific scholar, we can begin to see the main trajectory of his professional life.

Pamphlets of the American Revolution, 1750-1765. Belknap Press, 806 pages, \$83.25

The Origins of American Politics. Vintage, 192 pages, \$10.20 (paper)

The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution. Belknap Press, 416 pages, \$19.50 (paper)

The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson. Belknap Press, 423 pages, \$22.50 (paper)

The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction. Vintage, 192 pages, \$12 (paper)

Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution. Vintage, 720 pages, \$28.35 (paper)

Faces of Revolution: Personalities and Themes in the Struggle for American Independence. Vintage, 320 pages, \$16 (paper)

To Begin the World Anew: The Genius and Ambiguities of the American Founders. Alfred A. Knopf, 208 pages, \$26 (cloth), \$13 (paper)

Atlantic History: Concept and Contours. Harvard University Press, 160 pages, \$18.95

Most current historiography focuses on Bailyn's early work, recognizing his critical contribution to the rejuvenation of American intellectual and cultural history. His work on the American Revolution showed that political ideas played a crucial role in bringing it about. For this reason, he is rightly credited with helping to father the "republican synthesis" of the '70s and early '80s, which emphasized the role

of classical republicanism and Old Whig doctrines in sparking the 1776 revolution.

Experience and Ideas

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS FACT HAS OFTEN obscured Bailyn's more profound contribution to the history of ideas and political culture. Commentators list him among the architects of the republican interpretation but frequently overlook the dynamism and heterogeneity of culture and ideas evident from his earliest work. He is associated with what quickly became a rigid and static view of the republican paradigm: a view that came to stress its ancient lineage and backward-looking conservatism, and that is, thankfully, no longer the dominant interpretation of the revolution and founding.

Most scholars no longer insist on forcing a choice between classical republicanism and Lockean liberalism. Bailyn was there long before them. It is high time to see his work in the context of his growing appreciation for the complexity of thought in human life, rather than as an autopsy of a particular configuration of ideas. Understanding how historical change arises from the intersection of lived experience and individuals' ideas is Bailyn's core contribution, and it begins in the late 1950s with his path-breaking examination of colonial Virginia.

In his seminal essay "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," published as part of a collection on 17th-century America by the Institute of Early American History and Culture in 1959, Bailyn tackled a difficult problem bisecting social and intellectual history: If social structure is so central to ideas, why did the "class consciousness" of America's first transplanted elites not persist? Why did the evolving indigenous elites not assume the same ideological orientation as their English predecessors? The essay made a profound impact on the way the history of culture and of ideas was to develop.

Bailyn argued that the conditions and opportunities of the New World were as important as social position in influencing the choices Virginia's elite made in politics. It was not simply their standing within society, but their lived experience, that made certain notions of

republican government more appealing than the political assumptions of the traditional English aristocracy. It was not so much that real blue-blooded aristocrats were not present in Virginia. They were, but the sort who came and stayed were of a kind who could readily adapt to the hurly-burly of colonial life. They were men on the move, interested in land and capital, and had little time for pretensions to "public service" and noblesse oblige. Politics was business, and they assumed the self-interestedness of everyone involved in it.

As a consequence, the Virginia elite were well prepared to assume the worst of royal governors appointed by the crown and taxes imposed by Parliament. Regardless of royal insistence that new measures were necessary to defray the costs of colonial defense and in the interests of better administration, the Virginia gentry saw corruption. They assumed the worst because they themselves were well versed in the motives of men on the make. Not trusting each other, they searched for ways to express their anxieties and found it in old Whig republicanism. It described nicely the frailty of men tempted by power and lucre, and it provided a handy constitutional critique that both described what was going on in Parliament and suggested the proper remedy.

But the main point was the conscious intellectual selectivity of the Virginia elite. They were not passive receptacles of elite English opinion. Virginia's leaders articulated, or reworked, a cultural variant within English political thought because it resonated with their own experiences. Their choices were perhaps limited to the range of options presented by English and European ideas, but the selection was theirs. Individual writers, such as Richard Bland and Thomas Jefferson, made conscious selections from Whig opposition thought. It is here that we see the dynamic interplay of environment, culture, and politics in the active intellects of real historical persons. Bailyn made the same case again in a 1962 *American Historical Review* article, "Political Experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America." Here he sifted through the "the undeniable evidence of the seriousness with which colonial and revolutionary leaders took ideas, and the deliberateness of their efforts during the Revolution to reshape institutions in their pattern."

Birth of a Paradigm

IN HIS ORIGINS OF AMERICAN POLITICS (1965), Bailyn described artfully the conflicts between colonial elites and royal officials. This was followed and perhaps eclipsed by his specific treatment of ideas in

The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (1967). *Ideological Origins* took up the fate, in America, of the Old Whig or English commonwealth ideas of the early 18th century. Here, again, it was the peculiar relevance of these ideas, and the conscious choosing among them and adding to them that was at the core of Bailyn's history. The critique of power's corrupting influence, what might be called the "anti-power" ethic, resonated with American experience. But the independent contribution of the American experience was not fully appreciated by the profession at large. Inured to explanations from necessity—to structures of social causation such as class—both his critics and his proponents took Bailyn's insights in directions very different from his own.

Some detractors questioned the relevance of republicanism. If it was so important, it should have been more consistent with American experience than it was, asserted one reviewer in 1968 in the *William and Mary Quarterly*.



Colonial governors were not so powerful as their English counterparts—their powers were puny—so why the attraction to an ideology obsessed with executive corruption? He suggested that deeper psychological imperatives were at work. Still others contended that more study was needed of the harder realities of power embedded in the social structures of race, class, and gender.

Those who warmed to the republican theme—drawn to something different from Louis Hartz's old consensus history, obsessed with Lockean liberalism—offered a response that proved to be more consequential. Delving deeper into republican ideas, they discovered a whole wealth of assumptions and beliefs that appeared to contradict the Lockean thesis. Tracing lines of thought going back to early modern Italy, to Machiavelli, and ultimately to ancient classical sources, they constructed a whole new paradigm. Scholars like Gordon Wood, Isaac Kramnick, Drew McCoy, Lance Banning, and J.G.A. Pocock unearthed a wealth of republican thought in America and Europe far richer than anyone had imagined,

and in certain particulars, very un-liberal and non-Lockean indeed. In place of the individual seeking security for private rights of property and liberty, republicanism gave us a more politically concerned citizen laboring for the commonwealth by carefully preserving the constitutional balance of the one, the few, and the many. It was virtue, not interest, that motivated the American Revolution; self-seeking commercialism was more akin to corruption in the body politic than to the public good, according to the new republican consensus. Bailyn's insight had given birth to a paradigm.

A Comprehensive Theory of Politics

BUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH THE new outlook. As the leading critic of the republican thesis, Joyce Appleby, noted, it gave us a past that fit poorly with what we knew about America's future. From very early on, Americans were involved in the North Atlantic economy, had a reputation for their attention to the main chance, and were known to have celebrated, rather than lamented, the moral and material rewards of commerce. How could this be?

By the mid-1990s the republican interpretation was being displaced by a more complicated picture of American revolutionary ideas. Lance Banning would come to argue for "liberal republicanism" to signify a blending of Lockean individualism with republican politics. But a rereading of Bailyn shows that the lineaments of that larger synthesis were there from the beginning. Again, this has much to do with Bailyn's underappreciated view of historical transformation.

Never did Bailyn write Locke out of the American pantheon of intellectual sources; he set him alongside the other strands of revolutionary thought. This came directly out of his extensive work in the pamphlet sources—work that resulted in his editing of the still unfinished collection, *Pamphlets of the American Revolution* (1965). These sources revealed a heavy reliance on earlier British essays such as *Cato's Letters* and a rich tradition of Whig opposition thought, drawing from both ancient and modern sources. Somehow the Americans combined the belief in the corrupting nature of political power, borrowed from early republicanism, with the more modern celebration of individual rights in a commercial economy.

There is a dynamic quality to ideas in *Ideological Origins* that shows Americans actively selecting among a variety of viewpoints to understand their place within the empire. Thus Bailyn argued:

Within the framework of these ideas,



Enlightenment abstractions and common law precedents, covenant theology and classical analogy—Locke and Abraham, Brutus and Coke—could all be brought together into a comprehensive theory of politics.

This was no unchanging paradigm, but the vibrant and shifting undercurrents of English opposition thought, “stirred by doctrinaire libertarians, disaffected politicians, and religious dissenters.” It is this dynamic stirring that was and is the focus of Bailyn’s interpretation.

Where are the choices being made? Where is the influence of time and place being worked out? Within the individual actors themselves. But a discussion of ideas and modes of thought, of political tensions and social conflict, cannot by itself reach the heart of historical transformation. And perhaps that is why the dynamism Bailyn had hoped to convey in these earlier works was not so apparent. In light of his later attempts to blend the intellectual and the social realms with the biographical and personal, we see more clearly the implications of his early endeavors.

Individual Narratives

BAILYN’S EARLY WORK IN THE HISTORY of ideas would have been sufficient to earn him a distinguished place in the profession, but his next major undertaking revealed him to be a biographer of extraordinary elegance and sensitivity. *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (1974) examined the life of the last loyalist governor of Massachusetts. Hutchinson was reviled by American patriots, but through careful study of his extensive personal records Bailyn was able to show a proud man caught in the revolutionary maelstrom, whose personal moral character and comportment were anything but corrupt by the standards of his day, but whose capacity for dealing with the political situation at hand was woefully inadequate. Why the inadequacy, in light of such learning and intelligence? Why did Hutchinson make choices that in retrospect appear inflammatory and even reckless?

Bailyn’s narrative illustrates how an individual’s political decisions are informed by experience. Hutchinson was no less intelligent than Franklin. He was well acquainted with colonial concerns and shared his countrymen’s most basic hopes for Parliamentary restraint and no taxation. But in the end, he was unable to accept the revolutionaries’ deep moral commitments as anything other than political irrationality. Hutchinson was committed by long cultivation and experience to the Anglo political world of elite influence, where change comes incrementally, and “rationally,” and not by popular discord

and threats of resistance. In the end, he simply could not accept what a Franklin or an Adams could accept, and that led to choices that now appear deeply inadequate and even incendiary. Through his life, we see the intersection of position, ideas, and political interest.

Rather than writing pure biography or intellectual history, Bailyn was seeking to meld the two. Such heterogeneity promised attention to social forces, but within the context of comprehensible narratives of individual lives. That there were “deep forces at work,” was undeniable, but

the fact that the break [with Britain] was violent and revolutionary meant that in important ways it was the product of human decision and of the impact of personalities and ideas upon the events of the time.... [I]t therefore mattered who was in charge, who led the struggle, and who led the opposition to it; it mattered what kinds of people they were, what patterns of personal responses they brought to the public life of their time. Above all, it mattered what they believed, what motivated them, how they perceived the world and the events in which they participated.

Over the next two decades, Bailyn would work in sources close to the lives of these personalities, producing numerous monographs, articles, and presentations, some of which would be collected in edited volumes, while others would form the basis of his most ambitious project to date.

Launching this project in *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction* (1986), Bailyn set out to bring “together the major aspects of life in the American colonies—social structure and settlement patterns, demography and politics, agriculture and religion, mobility, family organization, and ethnic relations.” Yet he was quick to note, while “‘Peopling’ means motion, process, evolution in time...it is not abstract: it concentrates on individuals and their fortunes.” Not until the next volume in the series, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the American Revolution* (1987), would we see the fruition of Bailyn’s methodological and theoretical interests.

Voyagers to the West is what Bailyn promised—and more: the enfolding of structural analysis and biography, of social systems and individual narratives of 18th-century America. One might suspect, given the ambitious nature of the undertaking, that the reader would face a daunting array of data. In fact, the work is unified around the narrative of the voyage, what it meant to those who undertook it, and the social necessities that encouraged it—all rendered in prose that is engaging and compelling.

Connecting the Strands

IN A 1994 INTERVIEW, BAILYN NOTED THAT his writing frequently takes unexpected turns as he follows the evidence. Because of his conception of historical change, he lets the material shape the narrative, and while this produces considerable short-run messiness, over time, as the information steeps, a picture comes into focus: “There simply comes a time when the story begins to make sense, and one feels one can communicate it coherently.”

Readers can see the beginnings of that process in Bailyn’s work in the early 1970s. Many of these strands were brought together in *Faces of Revolution: Personalities and Themes in the Struggle for American Independence* (1990). Originally, Bailyn hoped that all these pieces would “form in the reader’s mind an integrated and rounded picture,” but despairing of that, he settled on providing “some pleasure and information to readers interested in our origins as a nation.” There is in fact an unfinished quality to this collection, though in retrospect we can see the direction of his efforts. We perceive Bailyn’s immersion in the data, and his playful conjoining of fact and interpretation. And most especially, we see an awareness of a larger picture coming into focus—not perfectly delineated—but there in the grand movements of the “peopling of half a continent,” and in the contours of an Atlantic world.

Perhaps the most impressive chapter in *Faces of Revolution* is “1776 in Britain and America: A Year of Challenge—A World Transformed.” The piece starts with the dramatic shift of ideas that sweeps across the English-speaking world of the late 18th century—highlighting Paine, Smith, Gibbon, Price, and the various declarations of the American colonies—and wonders: Whence this great torrent of radicalism? Bailyn considers the massive growth in populations and commerce and concludes that our field of vision must expand:

It must embrace parts of three continents and be detailed down to individual villages and land units of a few square miles. It must center on the British Isles, but focus not on London or the home counties but somewhere in the Irish Sea, with as much detail on northern Ireland and the Scottish Highlands as on southeastern England or the midlands. It must extend to the Western Hemisphere and include the North American continent west to the Mississippi. It must reach selectively into the continent of Europe, especially along the Rhine Valley and into northern Switzerland; and it must reach too, into several deep enclaves on the west coast of Africa.



Most arresting, however, is his linkage of great shifts in populations with the radical and conservative reactions of the times. Lord Hillsborough and other great English magnates were terrified by the prospect of depopulated villages throughout their English and Irish holdings. Confronted with the irresistible allure of the American frontier, they frantically sought ways to restrict emigration. But radicals such as Paine celebrated the freedom of the new evolving order, the rise of a new continental Atlantic power, and the undermining of aristocratic controls. Franklin is seen wrestling with his love of England and his loyalty to America. Out of his personal and political contest with Hillsborough, we see the shifting trajectory of his thoughts from reconciliation to independence. From ideas, to great social movements, to particular personalities, the piece illustrates beautifully how history can convey the fluidity of a moment in time. There were irresistible forces, but there were also multiple personal responses to them. A certain poetic quality in Bailyn's writing serves a powerful function. His history can touch the felt sense of every reader, that human beings are not merely acted upon, but are actors in their own times.

Bailyn's more recent collection, *To Begin the World Anew* (2003), is similar. Once more he has attempted to ferret out the various dimensions of this new world, asking how Americans viewed themselves and how they were viewed on the other side of the Atlantic. As he has frequently observed, they were provincial, but not outside the main currents of European civilization; they were intimately connected to the great shifts in population and of ideas taking place throughout the West. Bailyn moves from a series of biographical pieces (including further reflections on Franklin's personae and Jefferson's contradictions) into the political realm of *The Federalist Papers*, exploring the issues that make them both a product of their times and enduring explorations of essential questions—e.g., why is the question of controlling power still our question today? Although the book has a distinctly unfinished quality, Bailyn clearly wants his readers to draw connections within the vast array of cultural and political factors that he presents.

The Atlantic World

CLEARLY THESE PIECES BUILD ON WORK that produced *Voyagers to the West*, but that work is itself part of a still larger, unfinished formulation, and so we must steal a glimpse into Bailyn's new *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (2005). Here is a subject of staggering proportions and immense implications for the history not only of America but of the

Western Hemisphere. It is history writ large, promising to take its place along such other conceptual behemoths as Western civilization, the Ancient Mediterranean world, or the history of Rome. Indeed, the parallels are not accidental.

In this short but concise essay, Bailyn attacks his subject in two parts. The first is a straightforward historiography of how the idea of an "Atlantic world" developed from early conceptual roots in international relations and political theory. Ties between the U.S. and Britain, and their alliances in the two world wars, drew scholars into seeing the larger Atlantic world as forming a new sort of society. Many explicitly related the Atlantic world to the growth of the classical and Roman world around the Mediterranean sea. Here, however, was a civilization that embraced not two, but four continents: Europe, Africa, and North and South America. Initially, the object of this vision was to explain the growing political and military ties of the post-World War II world, but in the second half of his essay Bailyn takes a broader view. The Atlantic world, as he understands it, may in fact be breaking apart. Europe may at last be going its separate way from North and South America, or alternatively, all may be joining into a larger global order, but for him the 17th and 18th centuries are the very apogee of Atlantic civilization.

So he casts an even wider net than "the peopling of North America." With broad strokes Bailyn describes the connections among mercantile Spain, Holland, France, and England; the developing reliance on the slave trade; the growth of illicit and clandestine commerce outside of officially regulated markets; and the evolution of national identities in the new world. He then boldly describes the dynamic growth of reform ideas, drawing together not just England and America but much of the European continent, South America, and Africa. His point here is to extol the great movement of peoples that eventually undermined the moral foundations of the old power structures, encouraged trade in radical ideas, and produced an Age of Revolution (as R.R. Palmer first argued).

Is this to be another project distinct from his *Peopling* project, or is he simply elucidating a new and exciting field to which that project is one contribution? The work has the feel of his introductory volume, *The Peopling of North America*, but it does not explicitly announce itself as anything other than an exposition of "a very large subject now coming into focus." That said, it is easy to see how the new focus builds on everything Bailyn has done before. It will provoke and inspire future work in the field because it poses all the right questions: What is a civilization? What are the phenomena that tie it together? How do the participants in its making perceive it?

Bailyn writes, "History is what has happened, in act and thought; it is also what historians make of it." If he continues the project of "peopling," as I hope he does, he will have to continue to trace the sort of commercial, informal networks that arise from the activities of individuals throughout this Atlantic world. These associations, far more than the official alliances of states and governments, drew the Atlantic together in the first place, and continue to draw the world closer today. But Bailyn will have challenges to confront, and this is clear even in the choice of terms he employs in *Atlantic History*.

Bailyn writes of the illicit trades with Spanish colonies by Dutch and English traders as "the plundering of one nation's commerce by aggressive competitors," and of markets as "cunningly contrived." In fact, it was the official mercantilist regulatory institutions of all the empires that were contrived and parasitic, and that the merchants of every country sought to circumvent. The Atlantic merchants developed trade routes and practices quite independent of any grand contrivances. They were Bailyn's individual historical actors, ready to take risks based on imperfect but adequate knowledge that they were in the best position to assess. A more careful consideration of what a market is—an economic exchange in which both parties benefit—needs to inform his discussion of commercial relations, especially if he wishes to understand the individual actors as they understood themselves.

Perhaps the largest theme of *Atlantic History* is the story of how this boisterous economy stimulated thinking along liberal conceptions of individual rights and the abolition of human bondage. As Bailyn observes, this civilization

formed a distinctive regional entity, bearing the indelible imprints of both the settlement era—violent instability, cultural alienation, racism, and brutal economic dynamism—and the ideal of the latter years—self-government, freedom from arbitrary power, and a sense that the world lies open for the most exalted aspirations.

Here he returns to the motif of his first essays explaining the Americans' resistance to English governors: how economic growth and demographic forces can help to make a place for enlightened, reformist ideas—ideas chosen by men and women seeking to make sense of the world around them. That is the story Bailyn has been telling all along.

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Book Review by Richard Vedder

IN MARKETS WE TRUST

How Capitalism Saved America: The Untold History of Our Country from the Pilgrims to the Present,
by Thomas J. DiLorenzo. Crown Forum, 304 pages, \$25.95



WITHIN A CENTURY OF ITS FOUNDING, America outstripped the nations of Europe to boast the world's highest per capita gross domestic product. In the 1990s, the U.S. economy grew at twice the rate of Europe's and three times that of Japan's. Generations of scholars have pondered the genesis of this American exceptionalism. A century ago, Frederick Jackson Turner argued that America's uniqueness evolved from the Westward Movement of the American frontier and its individualistic, egalitarian tradition. Others point to the United States as a nation of immigrants, arguing that the "melting pot" has defined American resourcefulness, ingenuity, and material success.

In *How Capitalism Saved America*, Thomas DiLorenzo makes a compelling case for capitalism and free markets as the headspring of our peerless economic growth. Writing with a lucidity rare for an economist, DiLorenzo insists that government interference in the market process has harmed the nation, and that the expansion of unfettered capitalism has brought prosperity.

DiLorenzo's goal is to debunk views of what he calls "anticapitalists" or "mercantilists" about the source of success and failure in the American economy. He shows, for instance, how the traditional interpretation of "robber barons" like John D. Rockefeller is flat-out wrong. Rather than a "monopolist" who exploited customers with high prices, Rockefeller (and, more recently, Bill Gates) was a highly efficient competitor and innovator who lowered costs

and prices for oil (or, in Gates's case, computer software). Government anti-trust actions were prompted mainly by jealous competitors, and had the effect of stifling innovation and cost reduction.

DiLorenzo argues deftly that there are two types of successful entrepreneurs in American history: the "good" capitalist entrepreneurs who got ahead by offering better products at lower prices, and the political entrepreneurs, who milked the mercantilist dimensions of the political system. James J. Hill and Cornelius Vanderbilt were entrepreneurs who competed within the market system, while the promoters of, say, the transcontinental railroad of the 1860s were what economists call rent-seekers, spending a lot of time in Washington getting bigger subsidies and land grants from Congress rather than building better railways.

The parallels that DiLorenzo draws between Rockefeller and Gates are particularly intriguing. Both men made their money by building the equivalent of a better mousetrap. Both were responsible for a dramatic change in human spending habits, by cutting the price of their service. And both were harassed by the anti-trust police at the behest of competitors. In addition, both have given away vast bounties to serve the public good.

DiLorenzo picks examples demonstrating the virtues of capitalism and the vices of interventionist solutions to problems. For example, he marvelously shows how both the Jamestown and Plymouth colonies were literally starving to death until they abandoned a collectivist ap-

proach to production, in which all output was shared by the entire community. By defining individual property rights, pioneers like Sir Thomas Dale and William Bradford provided incentives for farmers to work hard and produce more, helping initiate the American capitalist tradition. DiLorenzo argues, correctly in my judgment, that the Revolutionary War was essentially a revolt against attempts to tax and regulate the gains from capitalistic endeavors.

DiLorenzo's account of the American experience is short and not comprehensive. Large parts of the American economic experience are not discussed, such as the Westward Movement, the rise of commercial banking and the expansion of agriculture, or the American industrial revolution. But despite its highly selective account, it incorporates some highlights of our historical experience. On the Great Depression and the New Deal, DiLorenzo points out the pitfalls of such government actions as the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, the Hoover-Roosevelt High Wage Policy, and numerous tax increases; America remained mired in depression for years. Whenever market forces led the nation to see the light at the end of the tunnel, the government added more tunnel.

THIS BOOK HAS SEVERAL THINGS GOING for it, but objectivity and balance are not among them. DiLorenzo makes no pretense of trying to present evidence on both sides of historical debates, a failure that some scholars argued marred his previous book, *The*

Real Lincoln (See Thomas Krannawitter, "Dis-honest About Abe, Spring 2002), an all-out condemnation of the 16th president. Much of the scholarly literature is ignored. He does little or no original research, but superbly describes the work of a select number of other scholars.

While errors are inevitable in a book-length treatise, the number in this volume is high, ammunition for detractors who will argue that this is nothing but a polemic. For example, DiLorenzo implies that Ohio tried to tax the First Bank of the United States out of existence in 1819, when in fact that bank's charter had expired years earlier and had been replaced in 1816 by the Second Bank of the United States. He claims the Sugar Act (1764) "levied higher taxes on sugar imports." Actually, the Sugar Act lowered taxes, but provided for rigid enforcement, heretofore lacking. DiLorenzo speaks about "economic historians Robert Gray and James Peterson," when really talking about Ralph Gray and John Peterson, neither of whom was an economic historian (although they wrote a textbook in the 1960s).

Sometimes DiLorenzo stretches the truth to make a point. He says that "progress against poverty in America stopped and reversed itself at precisely the moment when the federal government declared 'war' on it." Strictly speaking, this is incorrect. The poverty rate fell significantly in the first nine years after the War on Poverty was declared (from 19% in 1964 to 11.1% in 1973). It would have been correct to say, "Poverty rates had fallen sharply before the War on Poverty was declared, but stopped falling within a decade of the war's declaration—and even today are higher than three decades ago." DiLorenzo's point is valid that the War on Poverty was a failure in the long run, but the factual misstatements expose the entire argument to discredit.

One more example should suffice. Speaking of occupational injuries, DiLorenzo asserts that "they have not gone down since the creation of OSHA." That is dubious, to say the least. Statistics are distorted by changing notions of what an injury is, but my reading of the data is that decline has continued since OSHA's creation. Occupational fatalities (on which there are no definitional difficulties) are clearly down sharply over the last three decades. Still, DiLorenzo is more right than wrong. While occupational safety has improved, most of the improvement reflects changes in the nature of work (e.g.,

reductions in dangerous mining and factory employment), and is merely a continuation of improvements observed before OSHA was created. There is little evidence that OSHA has accelerated the downward trend. Yet, by denying the existence of such a trend, DiLorenzo reduces his credibility.

DESPITE ITS FLAWS, THIS IS A USEFUL book, showing that government interferences in market processes are almost always counterproductive. Yet the book raises as many questions as it answers. First, if governmental intervention is so harmful, why has it persisted and even grown over time? Second, are there constitutional ways we can curb the anti-capitalistic mentality? Third, why has the United States been more successful in curbing anti-market impulses than other nations, say, the major countries of Western Europe?

DiLorenzo talks some about the first question, but not exhaustively. How can special interests use government for their own good, in the process distorting market processes and crowding out private economic behavior? I see three major factors at work: rational ignorance, the "ratchet effect," and public subsidization of the chattering classes.

The concept of rational ignorance, in particular, is significant. Often government interventions benefit the few at the expense of the many. Assume 100 nursing home operators in a state seek benefits, e.g., above-market level Medicaid disbursements. The nursing home owners—seeing huge gains in their wealth—mount a massive lobbying effort, persuading and bribing legislators via votes and campaign contributions to get their favored law. The ordinary taxpayers lose a bit, but given the costs of keeping up with all the legislative proposals and the low probability than any one voter can effect change, they do not act. In doing so they are both rational and ignorant, in that they are essentially unaware of how the legislation is hurting them.

The term "ratchet effect" was coined by Robert Higgs (*Crisis and Leviathan*, 1988) to refer to the fact that once government expands in an emergency situation, it is rare for it to revert to its pre-emergency size. Thus the first income tax had a maximum rate of 7% in 1915, but was raised to well over 60% during World War I. After the war, the rate was cut under Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon—but only to 25%, far higher than the original top rate.

Finally, with the passage of time, we have enormously increased public subsidies to support a class of people, namely intellectuals and academics, many of whom seem insistent on spreading the myth that markets are bad and government is good. When incomes become dependent on government largesse, professors and other intellectuals risk developing an in-built bias against the capitalist system, devoting publicly funded time to finding non-existent or small imperfections in markets, and discovering benefits to government activities that are more theoretical than real.

ON THE SECOND QUESTION, ONE WONDERS if DiLorenzo believes that at least some progress against an inefficient, welfare-destroying growth in government could come through constitutional means—limits on spending growth, supermajority legislative votes (or perhaps popular votes?) for tax increases, line-item veto powers for the president, and so forth. My guess is that he is a pessimist on this score. The special interests will block constitutional change, and, as long as the judiciary remains unconstrained, the power to limit government will stay minimal. Yet some states (e.g., Colorado) have had real success in restraining growth of government for a decade or more. Thus it is puzzling that only a few devotees of smaller government are trying to modify the rules governing political behavior.

Why has America succeeded where others have not (although parts of Asia seem destined to follow the American experience)? Is it that "distributional coalitions" (to borrow from the late Mancur Olson) became more entrenched, earlier, in the older civilizations of Europe? Is it because the frontier fostered individualism and a distrust of collectivist solutions to social problems? Has the American federal system and the Constitution's separation of powers worked to put brakes on the growth of Leviathan in a way unseen in major European nations? Perhaps DiLorenzo can explore these and other questions in a sequel to this engaging, provocative volume.

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Book Review by Thomas Blau

THE WORLD AT WORK

Why Globalization Works, by Martin Wolf.
Yale University Press, 416 pages, \$30

In Defense of Globalization, by Jagdish Bhagwati.
Oxford University Press, 304 pages, \$28

Globalization and Its Discontents, by Joseph E. Stiglitz.
W.W. Norton & Company, 304 pages, \$24.95



TO THINK ABOUT GLOBALIZATION IS TO think about its controversies. Its critics see a set of beliefs and programs aggressively promoted by globalizers. Most of the latter, however, see only a natural process. They feel like Einstein in 1931 when the Nazis published *One Hundred Authors Against Einstein*; if he were wrong, one would be enough.

In these books three distinguished economists enter the fray. Martin Wolf is an editor at the *Financial Times*, and once worked at the World Bank. Jagdish Bhagwati is a University Professor at Columbia University and has written prolifically on international trade and development. Joseph Stiglitz, also a University Professor at Columbia, is a Nobel laureate who chaired President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors and served as chief economist and senior vice president at the World Bank.

Wolf's book is comprehensive and systematic, and based on a long view of the liberal economic order that produced an earlier "globalization" in the 19th century. To him, the debate over globalization is but the next round in the age-old conflict between liberalism and its utopian adversaries. He focuses especially on the relationship between the market and democracy. While accepting some criticisms of rich nations, he finds economic and political liberty to be morally and practically superior. In a short

space, he marshals a great deal of evidence, and he writes extremely well.

Bhagwati's book displays his mastery of economics, his skill as a communicator, and his eager generosity toward all arguments. He searches for rationality among the protesters so that he can meet their complaints with innovative policy ideas. In seeking, however, to convince them of globalization's "human face," he can go too far. For example, he wants to involve non-governmental organizations as well as corporations in "appropriate governance" for managing globalization. But he glides over the hard questions: What are the political and even practical implications of assigning such responsibilities to the self-elected? What is "appropriate" governance? How do we govern a market without killing it?

Stiglitz's book is worth reading because of his eminence in academia and in Washington, D.C., and because, rare among economists, he attacks globalization. He sees it as part of the "Washington Consensus" shared by the major international financial institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He blames them for a faith in markets that supplants the government spending that he, a loyal Keynesian, favors; and the result of such faith, he charges, is much suffering in the poor countries. He quotes Jacques Chirac, of all people, as an authority on how globalization

has not fulfilled its promise.

Apart from Stiglitz's emphasis on the Washington Consensus, the three authors define globalization similarly. Wolf describes it as the global integration "of liberalizing market economies at a time of rapidly falling costs of transportation and communication." He shows how economic nationalism ended the 19th century's comparable era of liberalization, and spoiled the interwar years as well, precipitating the Great Depression and World War II. It was with these disasters in mind that the U.S. hosted the 1944 Bretton Woods conference, the world's first attempt to formalize monetary relations among nations. The institutions it created—which would later become the World Bank and IMF—sponsored another worldwide liberalization of trade, which has accelerated in the last quarter-century due to technologies like the microchip, satellites, and the Internet, and the realization that economic freedom works.

But despite the manifest benefits of liberal trade, political resistance is growing. The collapse of Communism, far from ending support for the power of the state over the economy, "seems to have liberated utopians to dream, no longer constrained" by reality, according to Wolf. He recalls a banner at a London demonstration demanding that we "Replace Capitalism with Something Nicer." Wolf dis-

tinguishes three kinds of critics of globalization—one defending parochial interests, like American sugar growers or textile producers; the anti-liberal nationalists, like Jean-Marie Le Pen and Patrick Buchanan; and finally, the non-governmental organizations that “are often put under the convenient, if presumptuous, label of ‘civil society.’” Bhagwati adds a complaint about the influence of universities in creating anti-globalization youth long on indignation and short on knowledge. He is, however, more willing than Wolf to give the NGOs credit for good intentions. Stiglitz, the odd man out, has been kindest about anti-globalization protests and finds it “unfortunate” that “we have no world government, accountable to the people of every country, to oversee the globalization process.” He does not explain “accountability.”

GLOBALIZATION’S CRITICS MAKE DISPARATE claims, which Wolf and Bhagwati review and, in general, refute—for example, that globalization impoverishes domestic industry, exports jobs, and encourages trade deficits. At the root of this objection is the notion that economic life is zero-sum, perhaps the central dogma of the mercantilist faith. Although industries suddenly facing new competitors do have problems, their societies are, as a whole, better off. Wolf notes that there is no example in the last half-century of a nation growing rich through protectionism. Bhagwati asserts that the evidence against it “is really quite overwhelming.”

Other critics worry that globalization undermines national sovereignty. If citizens see alternatives to homegrown policies and products, they may switch. A variant is the complaint that globalization extends the economic dominance of the “Anglo-Saxons” or the U.S. “hyperpower,” in particular. And of course, those who enjoy a 35-hour workweek gripe about others who work 40 hours. Those paying high taxes to support large government complain of companies investing in places with lower taxes. To be sure, the nationalist complaint goes further, arguing that globalization undermines local ideas, language, and culture. Some of the reactions, like those of the Islamists, are grim. Others, like those of the French, are entertaining.

Bhagwati and Wolf deal conclusively with the idea that globalization creates economic inequality and poverty. They pay particularly close attention to China and India, which together account for one-third of the world’s people. Global inequality has been declining

since 1980, especially following China’s entry into the global economy (its real gross national product quadrupled between 1980 and 2000; India’s doubled). Data show that trade had a dramatically positive impact. Bhagwati concludes that “trade enhances growth, and that growth reduces poverty.” The anti-globalization movement also claims to speak on behalf of the voiceless—women, children, farmers, even the environment. But Wolf and Bhagwati show that all these are better off in market economies, though Bhagwati acknowledges the problem of human trafficking and the predicament of especially vulnerable migrants. He cautions, however, against blaming globalization for conditions that have always existed.

Along the same lines, critics argue that globalization enhances the malignant sway of multinational corporations, which exploit poor countries and create a “race to the bottom” by investing where tax and labor costs are lowest. But Wolf finds that multinationals actually do little business in the countries they are said to oppress. The “problem of the world’s poorest countries,” he writes, “is not that they are exploited by multinationals, but rather that they are ignored by them.”

STIGLITZ’S BOOK TAKES A DIFFERENT TONE and argues that globalization creates financial instability and increases the dominance of rich-country lenders over poor-country debtors. He blames financial crises on excessive financial liberalization pushed by the Washington Consensus, especially the IMF. Loosening capital controls in poor countries, he claims, benefits Western banks but causes harm where “hot money” quickly moves in and then out, leaving behind “collapsed currencies and weakened banking systems.” When borrowers then get into trouble, the lenders impose “conditionality” to change the debtors’ behavior. He objects to these enforced spending reductions because they can hit local social services. Bhagwati and Wolf agree with much of this. But Stiglitz goes to extremes, concluding that “globalization... often seems to replace the old dictatorships of national elites with new dictatorships of international finance.” Bhagwati counters that Stiglitz, a “splendid economist,” overrates the impact of lender conditionality. In a financial crisis, after all, the borrowers know very well that the lenders are also in a bind. (Owe your banker enough and you make him your partner.) Yet Stiglitz also wants to hedge his bets. Consider

this web of eight qualifiers (emphasis added): “There is *little doubt* that IMF and Treasury policies *contributed* to an *environment* that *enhanced* the *likelihood* of a crisis by *encouraging*, in *some cases* insisting on, an *unwarrantedly* rapid pace toward financial and capital market liberalization.”

In effect, Stiglitz wants the developed world to subsidize debtor-countries’ government spending and pay scales, and to forgive their debts. But such solutions have problems. Who wants to lend to someone who does not pay debts? He pays lip service to the contributing sins of local elites in poor countries—including greed, stupidity, and a willingness to accept reform only when outsiders can be blamed—but passes over problematic regimes such as have afflicted Argentina, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Mexico. He praises how the World Bank under Robert S. McNamara (1968-81) sought to understand “how markets failed in developing countries and [therefore] what governments could do.” Wolf, in contrast, who was there, objects that McNamara had “frighteningly little common sense” and a “Stalinist vision of development” that put the Bank “under great pressure to lend money, regardless of the quality of the project.”

For a big-time Washington operator, Stiglitz seems a little too shocked that staff at lending institutions think that the world needs more of what they have to offer; that the countries putting up the money want the institutions to follow their priorities; and that government involves politics, about which people differ. He complains of his Washington experience “that decisions were often made because of ideology and politics. As a result many wrong-headed actions were taken, ones that did not solve the problem at hand but that fit with the interests or beliefs of the people in power.” Stiglitz likes labels: His view is “balanced”; the others’ are “simplistic.”

Globalization increases individual choice and bypasses local authority, giving people more choice in what they buy, sell, read, and watch. Often those most likely to be downsized or underemployed as a result are those who make a living trying to direct other people’s choices, like traditional middle managers, government officials, clerics, and intellectuals. In a globalized world, surely we can find better things for them to do.

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THE LIMITS OF SPONTANEOUS ORDER

Hayek's Challenge: An Intellectual Biography of F. A. Hayek, by Bruce Caldwell.
University of Chicago Press, 500 pages, \$55

Hayek's Journey: The Mind of Friedrich Hayek, by Alan Ebenstein.
Palgrave Macmillan, 304 pages, \$27.95

FRIEDRICH HAYEK WAS AN INFLUENCE on Ronald Reagan and a substantial influence on Margaret Thatcher, not to mention on a legion of lesser lights in the conservative and libertarian movements. In the Soviet Bloc he was an inspiration to the oppressed and, after the fall of Communism, a guide along the road from serfdom. Given this record, Hayek's name should be better known. One might even think that his influence would have launched a conspiracy theory or two. Two intellectual biographies by Bruce Caldwell and Alan Ebenstein, both libertarians, bring a sympathetic ear to Hayek's life and work.

Born in 1899 into comfortable circumstances in cosmopolitan and imperial Vienna, Hayek was a precocious if somewhat erratic learner, dabbling in many areas of science and literature. In all, his family, his city, and the young man himself fairly embodied the promise of the modern world. During World War I, Hayek spent a year in an artillery unit on the Italian front and, although his personal circumstances were little affected, he returned to a Vienna where the political and intellectual landscape had changed decisively. In some ways, explaining this social earthquake would be the theme of Hayek's career.

Hayek studied economics and his first real job was in a government agency where his supervisor was Ludwig von Mises, a key figure in the Austrian school of economics. Perhaps more than any other, this association was responsible for Hayek's shift from Fabianism to what he described as classical liberalism. Hayek moved easily through the rich and heated intellectual life of post-war Vienna belonging to private seminars and discussion groups where the latest works of Weber, Mach, Kelsen, Husserl, and others were debated. Hayek's work in economics earned him a research trip to the United States and, eventually, a position at the London School of Economics in 1931. For the next decade he wrote almost exclusively on economic matters, specifically the trade cycle. Though prominent, he was overshadowed as an economist by John Maynard Keynes, something that would continue until the 1970s,

almost three decades after Keynes's death. In 1944, Hayek published the book that would make him famous, *The Road to Serfdom*. It sold well in England and even better in the United States. He savaged the reigning orthodoxy that to "save" capitalism a middle way involving state planning was essential. He seemed to show the inexorable logic by which planning not only subverts democracy and the rule of law, but leads to the very kind of totalitarianism that capitalism was intended to avoid. Planning, Hayek argued, is inherently arbitrary and inevitably requires the substitution of the opinions of a few for those of the many. He moved to the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought in 1950 and then in 1962 to the University of Freiburg, where he stayed until the end of his career. His physical and intellectual energies began to falter in the 1980s, and he died in 1992.

BRUCE CALDWELL'S *HAYEK'S CHALLENGE* is a carefully written, impeccably researched, and thoughtful book that is sure to become the standard in Hayek scholarship. Caldwell, a professor of economics at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, is general editor of the University of Chicago's *Collected Works of F. A. Hayek*. Caldwell begins with an excellent series of chapters devoted to the Austrian School of economics, in which Hayek began his studies. The Austrian School grew up in opposition to Gustav Schmoller's German Historical School. Reacting against the abstract universalism of both natural rights theories and Adam Smith's economics, Schmoller argued for an historically-based social science that would amass data through empirical studies in the hope of some day distilling laws of historical development. What made the historical school a force, however, was its somewhat contradictory belief that despite the preliminary character of its studies it was also charged with giving sage—critics said flattering—advice to the Prussian state. The opposition to Schmoller was led by Austrian economist Carl Menger, who made the case for economic theory, outlining what he claimed

was the essential and universal nature of economic choice: the relation between a person's needs and the goods that might satisfy those needs. He suggested also that the Historical School neglected one of the most important ways in which history operates: important social institutions such as law, language, money, markets, and even the state emerge through the unintended consequences of individual economic choices. It was out of this *Methodenstreit* that the economist Hayek was born.

One of the strengths of Caldwell's account is his discussion of Max Weber's lasting influence on Hayek. After his years at the University of Vienna, Hayek wanted to study with Weber, but the plan was derailed by the latter's death. Methodologically, Weber was in substantial agreement with the Austrians and he added one point of great importance, namely, the fact-value distinction. Caldwell tends to reduce Weber's great claim to a reaction against the political preachiness of the German professoriate. Nevertheless, he is right to stress its importance, a point to which we will return.

Hayek's lasting contribution to economic thought came when in the mid-1930s he began to rethink the presuppositions of economic theory. He came to see that the conventional assumption that individuals possessed "perfect" or complete knowledge to make their decisions is empirically false and reduces economic theory to an empty tautology. As he saw things, the essence of the economic problem is the scarcity and dispersed character of knowledge. The real economic problem is how to allocate knowledge so that it can be used in an efficient and timely fashion. Hayek argued that the free market, through the price system, conveniently conveys information to those who can use it best because they possess the local or particular knowledge to do so.

Hayek thought the implications of this insight numerous and important. It provided a powerful, indeed devastating, argument against socialism by pointing to the impossibility of efficient central planning: no planner or planning agency can acquire the information necessary to make the almost infinite number of daily de-

cisions required in a modern economy. Hayek challenged socialism on what to many was its strongest ground—the promise of a better standard of living—and showed it wanting. There were implications also for mainstream economics. Hayek saw the market as an effective, though not perfect, mechanism for coping with uncertainty. Economic fluctuations are inevitable but the best way to deal with them is to allow the market's own adjustment mechanism to work. Government action, by way of Keynesian economic management, say, is certain to do worse.

At the methodological level, Hayek's rethinking had profound implications for how the discipline of economics understood itself. He thought the attempt to follow the natural sciences in aspiring to be a positive, predictive science fundamentally mistaken. The complexity of social life meant that, at best, what Hayek called "pattern predictions" are possible. Economists can predict very general trends based on an understanding of the actual conditions under which individuals make economic decisions. At first, Hayek thought that he was elaborating a distinctively human science, but later he came to believe that the only difference between the social and the natural sciences is the complexity of the phenomena under examination. In the natural sciences it is possible to isolate a few variables for analysis, while in the social sciences there are simply too many variables for precise predictions.

Caldwell concludes his fine book with a plea to take the history of economic thought more seriously. He hopes that an awareness of its various schools—something that served Hayek very well—will check the enthusiasm of economists for a reigning orthodoxy. It is hard to disagree with him. Recent studies have called into question the extent to which economists really pay attention to empirical evidence. Indeed, when and where an economist went to graduate school seem just as important for determining his or her views.

Hayek's turn to politics in *The Road to Serfdom* seems abrupt but, as Caldwell shows, there are important continuities, especially when considered along with its sequels, *The Constitution*

of Liberty (1960) and the three volumes of *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* (1973-79). Following Menger, Hayek saw the market as an example of a "spontaneous order," that is, of an order that comes about as a result of human action but not as a result of human design. He came to believe that the idea of spontaneous order is widely applicable and central both to understanding society and to the preservation of liberty.

THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF HAYEK ARE taken up directly by Alan Ebenstein, a political theorist, in his useful book, *Hayek's Journey*. While it lacks the care and depth of Caldwell's, it gives a rapid-fire introduction to Hayek's intellectual career. Unlike the cautious Caldwell, Ebenstein is not afraid of big generalizations. He groups Hayek with Leo Strauss and John Rawls, suggesting that they may "perhaps...be considered the three greatest political philosophers of the twentieth century." He singles out Hayek as "the greatest philosopher of liberty in the twentieth century." These are claims worth considering.

Ebenstein's discussion of Hayek's surprising tolerance for some kinds of government intervention is a revealing place to start. As a libertarian, Ebenstein is uncomfortable with the degree to which Hayek encouraged state intervention in health, welfare, and many other public services so long as the rule of law (which he defined as truly general laws equally applicable to all) is observed and government monopolies are not created. Ebenstein observes that "Hayek did not really enunciate a principle for government interference. Rather he articulated the form that government interference should take, together with a preference that there should be less government rather than more." By failing to articulate a principle for distinguishing public and private concerns, Hayek remained true to the Weberian idea that social science is concerned with means to ends, not ends themselves.

This gap or limitation in Hayek's thought is evident as well in his idea of spontaneous order. Hayek embraced an idea of group selection as the mechanism of social evolution.

Good ideas and practices result in social progress, bad ideas and practices in decline. As noted, good ideas and practices themselves are not the result of the efforts of a single or a few minds but of the accumulated wisdom of generations, which no individual can possess. We cannot fully grasp how society works and it therefore stymies our attempts at manipulation, but we can, Hayek suggests, understand the mechanism through which social progress takes place. Hayek was, by his own testimony, no conservative. He looked forward to the future, so long as it was delivered to us by the same spontaneous orders that had brought us to where we were.

HOW PLAUSIBLE IS ALL THIS? DO GOOD ideas always win out? Is the new always better than the old? Surely the answers are: not very, no, and no. For one thing, as Hayek emphasized, bad ideas often have tremendous power. Moreover, the success of an idea is only an argument in its favor if there is an agreement over what constitutes success, and this requires an agreement about ends. Socialism could be vanquished if both sides could agree that the argument with liberalism was really about the most efficient way to organize an economy. But what if the appeal of socialism is a matter of justice, or of the nobility of the class struggle? Would it not then have to be opposed on grounds of principle? How effective would an evolutionary argument be to a convinced multiculturalist afraid of globalization? Or to a religiously motivated totalitarian convinced that social progress is in fact the work of the devil?

One can and must acknowledge Hayek's contributions to economics and to defeating 20th-century totalitarianism, but these two books leave open the question of whether Hayek ever confronted the greatest task before those wishing to defend liberty: that of giving a rational, principled argument in its defense.

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Book Review by Douglas E. Streusand

NEW TOTALITARIANS

New Political Religions, or an Analysis of Modern Terrorism, by Barry Cooper.
University of Missouri Press, 264 pages, \$44.95



IN HIS NEW BOOK, BARRY COOPER DRAWS on his background in political philosophy to produce a rich and revealing study of contemporary religious terrorism and the means of fighting it. The book breaks into three parts. The first two chapters connect the current struggle against Islamic totalitarianism (my term) to the prior wars against political totalitarianism, seeking to explain the phenomenon's spiritual and philosophical roots. This part is extremely insightful, at some points brilliant and compelling. The third and fourth chapters explore Islamic totalitarian ideology in the context of Islamic history; these are extremely astute in some areas but frequently flawed in others. The final chapter, on the proper conduct of the war against Islamic totalitarianism, is useful; the appendix, "History and the Holy Koran," is problematic.

Cooper's title alludes to Eric Voegelin's *The Political Religions*, a study of Nazism published in 1938. But another of Voegelin's works, "The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255," appears to be the model that Cooper seeks to emulate. This essay brought the political theory of the Mongol empire into sharp focus; writers on this topic either follow Voegelin or produce nonsense. Voegelin could not read the documents in the original languages and had no special knowledge of Mongol history. His understanding of the relationship of cosmology to political theory permitted him to find sense where specialists found only verbiage. Similarly, Cooper has no particular background in Islamic stud-

ies, does not read Arabic or Persian, and claims no expertise in the field of terrorism. But his knowledge of political philosophy, especially of Voegelin's and Hannah Arendt's analyses of the 20th-century totalitarians, permits him to identify several central elements of his topic that have eluded other observers.

Cooper does not mince words: "It seems to me that there is nothing deep or philosophical about Sayyid Qutb or any other terrorists who have committed their reflections to print. For the most part, they express a dogmatic certainty that comes from being philosophical and religious ignoramuses." Denying the common assertion that the terrorists are in some way insane, he writes:

The assumption that we make in this study is rather that their disorder is spiritual and that there is accordingly a spiritual dimension to the conflict with terrorists. Of course there is a material dimension as well, as there always is in politics, but it is peripheral. Whatever the genuine grievances terrorists exploit, they are secondary to their self-destructive, self-defeating spiritual perversity.

Cooper interprets the new political religions, by which he means the politico-religious doctrines that motivate contemporary religious terrorism, as the re-emergence of the same spiritual phenomenon that underlay fascism and Communism; the condemnation of "urban, bourgeois, prosperous, egalitarian" Western culture

as "decadent, arrogant, weak and depraved." Much of that alleged decadence stems from freedom of conscience and territorial sovereignty, two concepts underlying the modern West's achievements. Not merely Islamic totalitarianism, but all totalitarianism challenges these principles. More broadly, totalitarians reject the world as it is. The observation that totalitarianism is utopian is not new, but Cooper uses two Voegelinian concepts to explain it with clarity and rigor: "pneumopathology" and the idea of a second reality. Pneumopathology means spiritual insanity, the state of spirit which defines violence, specifically the killing of innocents, as "a magic instrument capable of transfiguring reality." The "second reality" refers not to the goal of the terrorist, the reality he seeks to create, but to the mental construct in which the terrorist sees the horrors he perpetrates as an appropriate means to an attainable end. For those who wish to comprehend the origin and dynamics of the political pursuit of utopia, Cooper provides a masterly explanation.

THE MASTER'S TOUCH APPEARS ONLY rarely in the second part of *New Political Religions*. In his diagnosis, Cooper wisely avoids the term fundamentalism in favor of "Salafism." The term Salaf refers to the righteous early generations of Muslims, whose example the modern Muslims who call themselves Salafiyya seek to emulate. Their concept of return, however, encompasses the establishment of a society and polity with the wealth and power of modernity but free of non-Islamic

cultural influences. But the use of this term for what Cooper and many others call Islamism (and I call Islamic totalitarianism) skips a step. The Salafi impulse is not in itself totalitarian; it does not involve a denial of reality. Before it could become totalitarian, Salafi Islam had to undergo a further transformation at the hands of Sayyid Qutb, whom Cooper discusses at length, the Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Pakistani thinker Abu al-'Ala Mawdudi (1903-1979), whom he mentions only in passing. Cooper's neglect of Mawdudi causes him to miss an important connection. Mawdudi, as Seyyed Reza Vali Nasr explains in *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution* (1994), studied the Western totalitarianisms extensively and borrowed from Lenin the concept of the vanguard party. Khomeini and Qutb read Mawdudi. Without that connection, an organization like the Islamic Republican Party, which helped Khomeini gain power in Iran, would never have existed. Salafi Islam developed in the late 18th and 19th centuries, primarily as a result of the internal dynamics of Islam itself. It did not produce a totalitarian ideology until the encounter with Western totalitarianism in the 20th.

This confusion stems from Cooper's lack of expertness in Islamic studies. His unfamiliarity with Arabic and with Muslim names leads to simple mistakes, such as transliterating Riza and Rita. Some of his errors are merely annoying, such as his description of the armies of Mehmet 'Ali of Egypt, who crushed the first Wahhabi movement, as Ottoman. Though Mehmet 'Ali was nominally an Ottoman governor, he was as much an enemy of the Sultan as he was of the Wahhabis. Other mistakes leave gaps in Cooper's logic, such as his failure to explain that Ibn Taymiyyah needed to justify the continuation of Mamluk hostilities against the Mongols because the Mongol khan had converted to Islam in 1295. Still others, like his repetition of the myth that the Mongols destroyed the irrigation systems of Iraq, are harder to explain. His as-

sertion that "the crisis of the 'decline' of the Ottoman empire motivated the restorative work of al-Wahhab" is dubious. There is little indication that 'Abd al-Wahhab responded to the relative weakness of the Ottomans in their confrontation with Europe. He sought to use political force to bring about spiritual renewal, not, like such influential thinkers as Jamal al-Afghani to use spiritual renewal to restore Muslim political power. Although Cooper has used much of the best scholarship on his topic (e.g., Reuven Firestone's *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, 1999; and Mark Juergensmeyer's *Terror in the Mind of God*, 2000), he neglects others, such as Vali Nasr's work, and frequently relies on outdated material, like Carl Brockelman's *History of the Islamic Peoples*, originally published in 1939.

THE FINAL CHAPTER, "COUNTERNET War," at first appears disconnected from the rest of the text. Derived primarily from the works of John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt of the Rand Corporation, it discusses methods rather than ideas. It forms a necessary part of Cooper's presentation because he holds that the European concept of war as a political struggle between states does not fit the confrontation with Islamic totalitarianism. Cooper refers to the European concept of war as Clausewitzian. Cooper's negative evaluation of Clausewitz follows views of Martin van Creveld and John Keegan; unfortunately he has not consulted Michael Handel. One sentence of this chapter summarizes the nature of the so-called war on terrorism superbly: "the al-Qaeda organization has developed a complex religious interpretation of its actions that is at once a pneumopathological fantasy and one that has great resonance among Muslims." Beyond the techniques of counternet war, Cooper sees the need for the development of "a persuasive Islamic story that explains to the Islamic world that terrorist spirituality is perverse, that indicates as clearly as possible. . . that far from being mar-

tyrs suicidal terrorists are simply murderers to be condemned, not exalted." His analysis provides a philosophical underpinning for Daniel Pipes's contention that only moderate Islam can defeat Islamic totalitarianism, and reinforces the need for effective public diplomacy to reduce the appeal of Islamic totalitarianism.

In the Appendix, drawing on Leo Strauss's "Jerusalem and Athens" and Voegelin's "The Gospel and Culture," Cooper argues for the need to examine religious scriptures historically and critically. The doctrine of the "uncreated Qur'an" defines any "higher criticism" of the Qur'an an attack on Islam. Though Cooper does not say so explicitly, he apparently believes that the construction of an alternative to Muslim pneumopathology requires critical analysis of the Qur'an and refers to the works of Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, John Wansbrough, Günter Lüling, and Christoph Luxenberg (a pseudonym) as the basis for such an examination. Cooper admits that he lacks the scholarly credentials to evaluate these works properly, but refers to them extensively, nonetheless. The controversial nature of this scholarship goes beyond the visceral Muslim response to it. Much of it is explicitly anti-Muslim, intended not to clarify but to destroy; much of it relies on dubious sources, techniques, and assumptions; hence Cooper's use of it is also questionable.

The New Political Religions is not a triumph like Voegelin's "Mongol Orders of Submissions," but is a notable success that deserves serious attention. This book should provoke scholars of Islamic civilization and students of, and participants in, the war on terrorism to read not only Cooper, but also Voegelin and Strauss and even Plato and Aristotle.

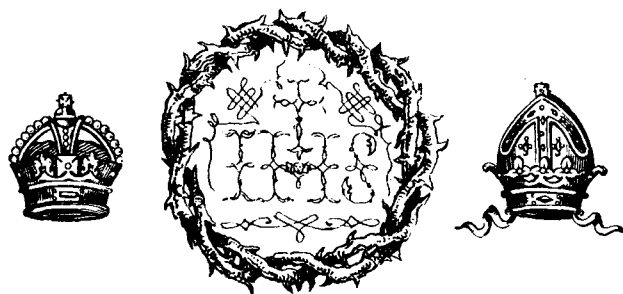
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Book Review by Robert R. Reilly

THE HIGHEST THINGS

Roman Catholic Political Philosophy, by James V. Schall.
Lexington Books, 230 pages, \$65



FR. JAMES V. SCHALL, S.J., HAS WRITTEN a book in a lapidary style that recalls the distinction Max Picard made in *Man and Language* between vertical and horizontal ways of writing. The horizontal is the modern mode: empty words tumble into each other like a collapsing set of dominoes, hurrying toward an unknown destination; all they produce is movement. In the vertical mode, which Picard associates with classical Latin, the words stand upright like sentries, arresting the reader, each demanding the countersign of comprehension before allowing passage to the next. Every word is, in a way, complete. It stands for something; it defends what it represents, "what is," as Schall would say. This is a book of such words, as close to Latin as English can come, so tightly and leanly written that it could almost be read as a book of epigrams. In fact, in an act of further refinement, the book ends with 33 aphorisms. *Roman Catholic Political Philosophy* is thus both simple and dense—simple in its startling clarity, dense in its richness of meaning, a work of great metaphysical integrity.

The title is meant to provoke those permanently caught—like modern-day Tertullians—in the grip of tension between Athens and Jerusalem who, never having considered Rome, believe reason and revelation are incompatible. The late Frederick Wilhelmsen used to say that Catholic political philosophy is political philosophy done by Catholics. In other words, if you accept Christian revelation, you simply go about philosophizing in light of its truths. You reason about revelation. But is that still philosophy, or has it been fatally polluted by an irrational faith that is blindly accepted? Many conclude the latter. Or on the other hand, as Eric Voegelin suggested, are philosophy and revelation really the same, albeit differentiated things, leaps in being from the same source, both kept in irresolvable tension toward a common transcendent ground

that they can only symbolize but never fully reach? And what is at stake here for political life and how we think about it?

Schall is a Catholic priest, a long-time professor of politics at Georgetown, who philosophizes. He embodies the paradox he seeks to explain, a man of reason and revelation in one. This book is not so much his answer to these questions, which he has offered in other books, as it is the question itself, properly posed. As he says, you will never understand the answer if you have not asked the right question. In this book, Schall lays out the metaphysical groundwork for that question so that it is, first of all, open to an answer. This is no mean feat of recovery in a world of ideologies that are answers without questions or, perhaps more accurately, answers that foreclose questions. As a Hungarian student in the Communist era once told Schall, "You cannot ask about the best regime in an already perfect state." And then there is the problem of modern philosophies based on epistemologies that preclude answers because they divorce the mind from reality.

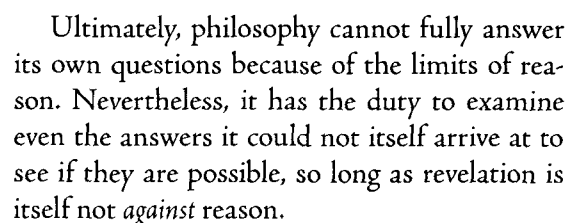
OF COURSE, SOME CLAIM THAT REVELATION forecloses questions as well—in a way that does not satisfy reason. But that depends on the nature of the revelation. As Schall has pointed out elsewhere, this is the problem with Islam insofar as it reduces God to his omnipotence, as over against his reason. Where unlimited will is the exclusive constituent of reality, there is really nothing left to reason about. As he said in an interview with the Claremont Institute's Ken Masugi (available at www.claremont.org), "this understanding of the Godhead as pure will has something wrong with it in principle." And "[i]t is by no means a neutral principle." Whether the notion of pure will as the basis of reality originates in a deformed theology or in Hegel or Hobbes, the

political results will be pretty much the same tyrannical rule. Disordered will, unfettered by right reason, is *the* political problem.

In this volume, Schall uses the term revelation to refer exclusively to Christian revelation as it is understood in Catholicism. According to him, there is no derogation of reason in Christian revelation. Rather, Christianity contains an invitation to reason because God is revealed as *logos*. He claims that "what is revealed does not demand the denial of intellect, but fosters it." If God is *logos*, reason and revelation are not at an impasse. A division of labor defines them. The common objective is the search for the highest things, and reason is given primacy in this search, including in its examination of the truths claimed by revelation. As Schall says, in Christianity, "revelation itself has turned to philosophy precisely to explain more fully what is revealed." Christian revelation confirms reason in its authority. At the same time, revelation has a claim on reason. A philosophy that *a priori* excludes the possibility of revelation is a philosophy that is not true to itself. This book is about "how the highest things of philosophy, politics, and revelation relate to each other."

In his interview with Masugi, Schall said:

we will not know, intellectually, if revelation has happened, unless we have first taken the trouble to examine the questions that arise in the experience of political and human things together with the varieties of answers that have been given to these questions by the philosophers.... I like to say that the study of political philosophy ought to bring such questions forward in our souls so that there is a kind of longing or searching that arises from the suspicion that none of the answers so given have been complete or adequate.



In the complementarity of reason and revelation, he claims that revelation saves politics from arrogating to itself powers it does not have—which are themselves ruinous to politics, as demonstrated by the 20th century's ideological bloodbaths. At the same time, politics points beyond itself because questions necessarily arise from its practice that politics cannot answer. As the introduction states, "Revelation articulates a more clear and defined end than even the philosopher could envision by his own powers. Yet, the efforts of the philosopher to envision this end were themselves needed to understand why revelational answers were answers to real questions that did not arise only from revelation."

In one of the most moving passages of political philosophy, Socrates says: "In heaven there is laid up a pattern of it [the ideal city] methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding may

set his own house in order. But whether such a one exists, or ever will exist in fact, does not matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other." As Schall has said elsewhere, in a world in which so much goes wrong, "[Socrates'] whole life is devoted to founding a republic in speech in which things go right. To put this city in speech in our souls is the essence of what it is to know." In other words, the good and the wise will live according to a spiritual order that transcends the actual and particular order in which the individual lives. Socrates' transcendent view beautifully adumbrates St. Paul's description of Abraham in the *Letter to the Hebrews* (chapter 11) as "looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and maker is God" and his declaration that, "As you well know, we have our true citizenship in heaven." In the Masugi interview, Schall says, "it is revelation that generally makes us see how very close to the truth that Plato actually was."

The great Christian contribution to the question of man's nature and his ultimate end is the revelation that man's soul is not only, as Socrates said, drawn to the good; it is drawn to goodness itself, which is God. Ironically, by offering a vision that transcends politics, Christianity enables politics to focus on its proper study—how best to govern man in this world. In an earlier work, *The Politics of Heaven and Hell* (1984), Schall wrote, "Christianity was vital to the very structure of classical political thought because it was able to give a reason why politics did not have to be concerned with man's highest destiny or virtue. Resurrection and the Kingdom of God suggested both that man's deepest desires would be fulfilled and that politics could, consequently, pursue a temporal good in a human, finite fashion." Since man's ultimate human happiness lies in God, and a transcendent God is, by definition, outside of history, man cannot make his home in this world. Thus, the salvific engine for the transformation of mankind and the elimination of evil is not politics. It is Christ. This is what ultimately limits, and therefore makes possible, politics.

POLITICS CANNOT, AND SHOULD NOT AT-tempt to, transform man spiritually or turn the world into a paradise. Instead, politics ought to arrange the material circumstances of man's life to mitigate the effects of evil, so that he can pursue virtue and, in so doing, achieve the ultimate happiness that lies beyond politics. Political philosophy has to defend these limits so the city does not succumb to the temptation of transforming itself into the engine of man's salvation. Otherwise, the city will approximate some version of the proto-totalitarian state that Plato predicted in *The Republic*. Schall says that the best defense of politics as politics "is, ultimately, the adequate description of the highest

things, of what is beyond politics." Both reason and revelation are needed for this defense.

The things that point us beyond ourselves come from our consideration of “what is,” the two words that appear over and over in this book, both in the form of a question and as an answer. “What is” is the given, antecedent to our thinking; it is reality. Our experience of “what is” is what we reflect upon to gain knowledge of who we are and how we ought to live. These are givens; we do not get to make them up. If we wish to make them up for ourselves, we must break the relationship between our minds and “what is” so that we are no longer constrained by reality. This requires an act of willful ignorance. “This unknowing,” says Fr. Schall, “is taken to be a guarantee of freedom, almost the opposite of the classic meaning of freedom as the capacity to learn from and know what is not oneself.”

A NIHILIST PROFESSOR OF MINE DEFINED modernity as the acceptance as real of only those things that we could change. By simply denying the existence of those things over which we have no power, we can be as gods, so to speak. Man can become his own cause. This is the modern project. The things “beyond us” become the here and now, pliable and ripe for our desired transformation of them. Toward the end of his book, Schall avers, “A politics that conceives itself to have no limits is the main rival to revelation in any age, including our own... ; it strives in effect to take the place of both reason and revelation, to become itself a metaphysics defining by itself a will-based ‘what-is.’” It is, in other words, a substitute faith, ironically one often accepted by the very people who denounce revelation as irrational.

Political philosophy has the obligation to look at all cities—Athens, Jerusalem, and Rome. Today, Rome seems the least familiar of these three, and there is no better guide to it than Fr. Schall. For those confronting modernity, it is an essential visit because, as he has pointed out in *Reason, Revelation, and the Foundations of Political Philosophy* (1987), modernity is not a distortion of classical political thought, but of Christianity. Millenarian ideology attempts, in its clumsy and destructive way, to ape the redemptive action of Christianity—of “God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.” Therefore, the recovery from modern ideology requires far more than the resuscitation of classical political philosophy, though that in itself is a good thing.

One need not be a Catholic, much less a Christian, to grasp the importance of *Roman Catholic Political Philosophy*.

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MODERN REPUBLICANS

Machiavelli, Hobbes, and the Formation of a Liberal Republicanism in England,
by Vickie B. Sullivan. Cambridge University Press, 294 pages, \$75

IN THIS AMBITIOUS AND INTERESTING book, Vickie Sullivan challenges the conventional interpretation of Machiavelli and his influence on the English republican tradition. The prevailing interpretation, long associated with the writings of Quentin Skinner and J.G.A. Pocock, among others, contrasted Machiavelli's supposedly classical and even noble politics of self-sacrifice with the stunted individualism of nascent liberalism. These scholars saw Machiavelli's old-fashioned republicanism locked in a running battle with Hobbesian and later Lockean modernity. Sullivan, an associate professor and chair of the political science department at Tufts University, describes instead a gradual synthesis of modernized republican means with liberal ends.

Although Machiavelli and Hobbes would have rejected such a combination, Sullivan insists that "each offered essential components" for an actual synthesis. Machiavelli's denunciation of prior political thought's aristocratic bias enabled later English synthesizers to argue on behalf of popular participation and a tumultuous public square. Hobbes too, for Sullivan, supported the people's desire for security against the aristocratic quest for glory while rejecting popular participation as contrary to peace. Hobbes, therefore, was no liberal, but his notion that equal and essentially self-interested individuals can never renounce their right to self-preservation gave birth to the idea of limited government. This led, in turn, to the development of commercial republicanism, in which Machiavellian passions are channeled to protect and promote individual well-being.

This is a plausible argument, and Sullivan defends it vigorously, but in highlighting an unduly neglected aspect of English republican thought, she obscures important distinctions between Hobbesianism and Machiavellianism that explain the conventional interpretation's broad and lasting appeal.

Sullivan begins by focusing on Machiavelli and Hobbes in order to establish the common ground between modern republicanism and nascent liberalism. She shows how both theorists elevate the passions, denigrate reason, and reject divine and natural standards for moral and political life. While accurate in most respects, her

interpretation ignores or minimizes important differences. For instance, she treats Hobbes's critique of pride as more or less equivalent to Machiavelli's wariness towards ambitious aristocrats, but Hobbes is far less concerned with social classes than with universal human character traits. His constant biblical references—including the title of his masterpiece—may be as phony as Machiavelli's appeals to ancient history, but given such disparate tastes in window dressing, can the underlying intention really be so similar? Even an atheist might take the story of Adam's disobedience, or the Israelites' rejection of Samuel, as perfectly valid representations of problems at the root of political life. But however our atheist interprets these biblical stories, he would be unlikely to draw the same lessons from Machiavelli's naughty examples of Roman plebs and patricians.

For Sullivan, though, the differences between Machiavelli and Hobbes turn out to be less important than the similarities, and are reducible to a single point of contention: Whereas Machiavelli is a cynical democrat, who advocates political inclusion of the people only because the people will support military expansion, Hobbes is a closet democrat, who is so devoted to the people's desire for peace and security (and opposed to the aristocrats' hunger for war) that he wishes to empty the public square of all potential combatants, nobles and commoners alike.

Given this foundation, a would-be synthesizer only needs to substitute Hobbes's goal of peace, security, and comfort for Machiavelli's goal of military expansion to insure the desired outcome. The people will now be included in politics not to supply imperial cheerleaders or even cannon fodder, but rather to defend their individual interests by maintaining a jealous watch over their rulers. At the same time, the thirst for glory which once would have led to war is now harmlessly vented in the competitive but peaceful pursuit of commerce and industry.

SULLIVAN ATTEMPTS TO MAKE HER CASE by turning to six thinkers in the English republican tradition. She begins with Marchmont Nedham, a journalist best known

for his multiple shifts of allegiance during and after the English Civil War. When Nedham proposes bringing the people into government, he shows Machiavelli's influence, but when he says that the goal of government is the protection of personal liberties rather than glory or conquest, Sullivan sees Hobbes as the dominant influence. And by extending Hobbes's right of self-preservation to cover liberty and property, as well as life, Nedham anticipates Locke's theory of limited government and the right of resistance.

James Harrington, Sullivan's next example, would seem to contradict the author's thesis, and indeed she acknowledges that later republican writers would have to overcome *Oceana's* influence before they could fully assimilate liberal premises. Harrington, after all, shares Machiavelli's admiration for the martial exploits of ancient republics and is perfectly willing to sacrifice the people's desire for security to the goal of national conquest. But to Sullivan, Harrington is swept along by that current of English intellectual history flowing inexorably towards a liberal-republican synthesis. If he refused to follow Nedham's precocious lead, he was still "an early but prime exemplar of the modern impulse to... channel interests so that they are checked against other interests."

Sullivan sees Henry Neville, Harrington's protégé, as a more subtle Machiavellian. Like the Florentine, Neville disguises radical innovations behind traditional political forms, but he shuns violence and denies the need for a lone founder. Unlike Harrington, he explicitly adopts the Hobbesian doctrine of an original violent state of nature, with consensual government as the only possible solution. Neville's republican proposals therefore rest on "an individualistic understanding of the place of politics in human life."

Algernon Sidney, in Sullivan's view, anticipates Locke, while secretly admiring Machiavelli. In fact, Sidney is more Machiavellian than even Harrington because he accepts the need for a vindictive populace, willing to undertake civil war to defend lives, liberty, and property. Moreover, like Locke, and not Hobbes, Sidney argues that natural liberty is a gift rather than a burden, and therefore constitutes a standard

against which governments can be measured. In the end, only his Machiavellian scorn for commercial republics prevents Sidney from completing the pattern of intellectual development Sullivan detects in his immediate predecessors.

Finally, Sullivan turns to *Cato's Letters*, in which John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon openly cite Machiavelli as they excoriate those involved in the 1720 financial crisis known as the South Sea Bubble. In the conventional interpretation of English republicanism, the letters are expressions of nostalgia for a lost world of civic virtue, but in Sullivan's view, they are "the final synthesis of Machiavellian republicanism with Lockean liberalism." Cato is "a thoroughly modern thinker," who follows Hobbes and Locke rather than Aristotle by asserting that human beings are controlled by their passions and that they establish governments to fulfill individual needs. Cato recommends political participation, not because it is consistent with human nature or necessary for the attainment of happiness, but simply to secure individual rights against government. Self-interest is not to be overcome, but "enlarged and educated."

Clearly, Cato's example best supports Sullivan's critique of the prevailing scholarship. Yet her argument that English republicans were not upholding a truly classical standard does little to dispel the fact that Machiavellian republicanism is still radically different from social contract liberalism. Granted, Machiavelli is no mere conduit of ancient political thought, but whatever clarity is to be gained from draw-

ing sharper distinctions between ancients and moderns is squandered if the moderns are considered fungible, or at any rate complementary.

To say that Hobbes chooses peace and prosperity, and thus favors the people over the aristocracy, is to read his theory through Machiavellian lenses. For Hobbes, peace and prosperity are the inevitable outcome of a correct understanding and institutional accommodation of *universal* human capacities and limitations. *Leviathan* is artificial, not manipulative.

Even as she argues that Hobbes and Machiavelli share a reliance on the passions, Sullivan must admit that Machiavelli's celebration of the people "originates from his own pursuits, not from theirs." Moreover, Machiavelli's formula for a perpetual republic demands universal activism and at least occasional willingness to violate the most sacred taboos.

Hobbes's emphasis on natural right runs in the opposite direction. He is not concerned with encouraging political action, but with fostering obedience, and he does so not by threats or promises, but by encouraging individuals to consider what would happen if everyone's natural inclinations were simultaneously realized.

SULLIVAN'S ANALYSIS IS ALL THE MORE troubling for its substantial accuracy. Cato may indeed represent the culmination of a process of blending modern theories, rather than a reaction against them. But this is not to say that Cato correctly understands the ingredients being mixed. And, if the ingredi-

ents are misunderstood, the question remains: Is it possible simultaneously and coherently to promote liberal as well as republican political agendas?

At the end of *Leviathan*, Hobbes praises his late friend Sidney Godolphin as a man whose life proved that it was possible to combine *seemingly* contradictory traits such as a readiness to forgive personal affronts and an eagerness to risk death in defense of the state. The key to Godolphin's reconciliation, Hobbes suggests, is a profound respect for the sometimes fragile distinction between public and private life. The man who stands his ground in defense of the state is the very same man who overlooks a personal insult, yet the circumstances are different: law and obligation govern the former, while self-interest and charity compete for control of the latter.

Machiavelli's protagonists, of course, respect no such institutionalized distinction. Indeed, for the sake of founding and renewing the state, they deny its very possibility. This is what makes the English republican synthesis such a dubious proposition. As Sullivan describes Cato's ideal, it seems to require attitudes of obedience and ambition, a love of security and an eagerness for self-assertion, to coexist in every citizen. One strains to imagine what such a citizen would resemble, if not some creature, part-worker, part-rebel, part-hero, and entirely mythological.

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REDEEMING THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments, by Gertrude Himmelfarb.
Alfred A. Knopf, 304 pages, \$25



GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB WISHES TO redeem the Enlightenment. She succeeds at two agendas, one broad and scholarly, the other narrower and more political. In her broader agenda she replies to the now fashionable activity of "Enlightenment-bashing" carried on by thinkers like Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, who attack it as totalitarian, or Alasdair MacIntyre, who writes with a barely concealed sneer for "the Enlightenment project." Himmelfarb's narrower and more political concern is to explain and legitimize the contemporary American exceptionalism Europeans find so puzzling and objectionable. Although her book was written well before the last presidential election, it speaks very much to the kinds of issues raised by the Bush campaign's fusion of moralism, religion, and a commitment to liberty, all summed up in the slogan "compassionate conservatism." In this respect, Himmelfarb also supplies a brief for a certain version of neoconservatism.

The "Enlightenment Project," buffeted from every side by waves of romanticism, historicism, collectivism, existentialism, multiculturalism, postmodernism, religious revivals, and who knows what else, stands in some disrepute today. It is criticized as too individualistic, rationalistic, radical, conservative, ahistorical, doctrinaire, universalistic, and irreligious. Himmelfarb seeks to redeem it by reconfiguring our sense of what it really was, replacing the standard image of the French Enlightenment and its cadre of *philosophes* with

the British Enlightenment and its core of moral philosophers. She admits that we hardly think of the British as having had an Enlightenment at all. But since 1900 or so, scholars have spoken easily of a Scottish Enlightenment. Himmelfarb insists, rightly I think, that it is artificial and indeed false to recognize a Scottish Enlightenment as separate from intellectual developments to the south. The forerunners of this Enlightenment (as she sees them) were Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, and they were both English. They set the stage for the broader British Enlightenment but also for the two other Enlightenments she considers more briefly, the French and the American.

The originator of the British Enlightenment was, by her account, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who, as a young man, was tutored by John Locke, and later repaid the favor by penning a potent critique of his tutor in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times*. Her emphasis on a Shaftesbury-led British Enlightenment breaks the link between the idea of Enlightenment and the doctrines of the French *philosophes*. She attempts, in other words, to supplant Peter Gay's Franco-centered history. Gay's two-volume study *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (Vol. I, *The Rise of Modern Paganism*, 1967; Vol. II, *The Science of Freedom*, 1970) influenced a generation of scholars. The French Enlightenment, says Himmelfarb, made a religion of reason; thought nothing of turning against every institution, practice, or belief prevalent in society;

had an obsession with liberty, understood in a very abstract and individualistic manner; and ultimately led to the French Revolution's ill-fated attempt to regenerate or remake the species "man." Although she does not spend much space criticizing the *philosophe* worldview, it is quite clear that this is not the Enlightenment she seeks to redeem.

THE CENTER OF HER EFFORTS IS A presentation of an alternative British Enlightenment with quite different themes and emphases. The British Enlightenment from its origin in Shaftesbury to its peak expressions in moral philosophers like Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, and Adam Smith, and in cultural enlighteners like the artist William Hogarth or the novelists Laurence Sterne and Henry Fielding made virtue, especially social virtue, its central theme. The opening salvo was Shaftesbury's discovery of an innate moral sense, sometimes thought to be a sense like sight or hearing, which could perceive moral qualities as the eye could perceive visual qualities. Not all the thinkers of the British Enlightenment clung to such a naïve view. Hume and Smith chose to speak instead of moral sentiment, but all had in mind the affirmation of an innate moral capacity, an innate and natural directedness of human beings to life with others, to society and morality.

This version of moral philosophy was consciously understood to be directed against the doctrines of Hobbes and Locke and their closer

English followers, like Bernard Mandeville, as well as the French *philosophes*, who, for the most part, were also closer to Hobbes and Locke. While Locke denied any "innate practical principles," Himmelfarb's moral philosophers insisted on the innateness, or at least naturalness, of morality. Hobbes and Mandeville adhered to what Hume called "the selfish system"; the British moralists affirmed "the social system." The difference between the two broad schools lay in the relation they saw between morality and self-interest. The Hobbes-Mandeville position found that egoism was natural and primary, and that moral rules, especially rules of justice, were secondary, derivative, artificial, and ultimately in the service of individual pleasure or preservation. As Hobbes had it, morality consists in the rules that reason reckons as serviceable to self-preservation. Hutcheson, Hume, and the others denied that morality could be reduced to an epiphenomenon of egoism or calculation.

Himmelfarb rightly depicts the moral philosophers as committed to a social ethic. The natural ground of morality is our sympathy, our compassion, our natural benevolence. Virtues are thus understood as thoroughly social qualities, and predominantly those aspects of character that fit us to live well with others and to care for them. Thus, although Shaftesbury presented his doctrine as an effort to recapture the moral perspective of the ancients, the kind of virtue emphasized by the British Enlightenment is actually different from Aristotle's notion of virtue as self-perfection. Likewise, the British moralists much undervalued the place of reason in the moral life: morality was understood to be more natural (though in a way completely different from Aristotle's account), and therefore less rational than Hobbes or Locke had it.

HAVING IDENTIFIED THE HEART OF the British Enlightenment with this sort of social ethic, Himmelfarb draws a rather different roster of who's in and who's out. For instance, she includes Edmund Burke, normally considered an anti-Enlightenment thinker for his tirade against the French Revolution, and for his endorsement of prejudice, religion, and the normative pull of tradition. She also includes John Wesley and the Methodist movement, while almost excluding those like Thomas Paine, William Godwin,

and other "radicals" who are normally seen as the clearest representatives of the Enlightenment in Britain. Instead, she says, they are more like their French counterparts, and for that reason, marginal to the British Enlightenment.

The true British Enlightenment, with social virtues at its core, drew quite different conclusions about what an enlightened society ought to look like. Since morality is a non- or even sub-rational phenomenon, the British did not obsess so much about reason nor demand that society be remade on a rationalist plan. They did not see religion as an enemy, but, if properly cabined so as to be tolerant and socially beneficial, as a necessary and good part of society. Thus even the more personally skeptical of the British thinkers, like Hume or Gibbon, never launched the sorts of attacks on religion so common in France.

Himmelfarb also tries her hand at solving "the Adam Smith problem," i.e., the alleged incompatibility between Smith's social ethic in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and his market-oriented *Wealth of Nations*. She finds the solution not in any alleged development or change in Smith's views, but in a richer understanding of the latter book. Although Smith defended the market, he did so in terms that are highly critical of certain features of market economics that later enthusiasts willingly accepted. Even more to the point, she brings out how Smith's defense of the market is grounded, throughout, in the moral ends outlined in his book of moral philosophy.

The British Enlightenment culminated in what Himmelfarb calls an "Age of Benevolence," that is, of organized efforts at philanthropy and moral reform. The British, unlike the French *philosophes*, were concerned to educate and otherwise elevate the underclass in society. They took an active part in the anti-slavery movement, they established hospitals, planned for poor relief, and initiated the movement for public education.

The American Enlightenment gets a brief treatment in *Roads to Modernity*, almost as an afterthought. The Americans took for granted the social ethic but did not put it at the center of their thought. Instead, they emphasized political liberty. The central document of the American Enlightenment is *The Federalist*, a work which develops an improved science of politics aimed at securing political liberty. Although the American Founders did not

place virtue or religion at the center, they still assumed and depended on both. But these were matters to be left to the states and the private sphere rather than developed by the central government.

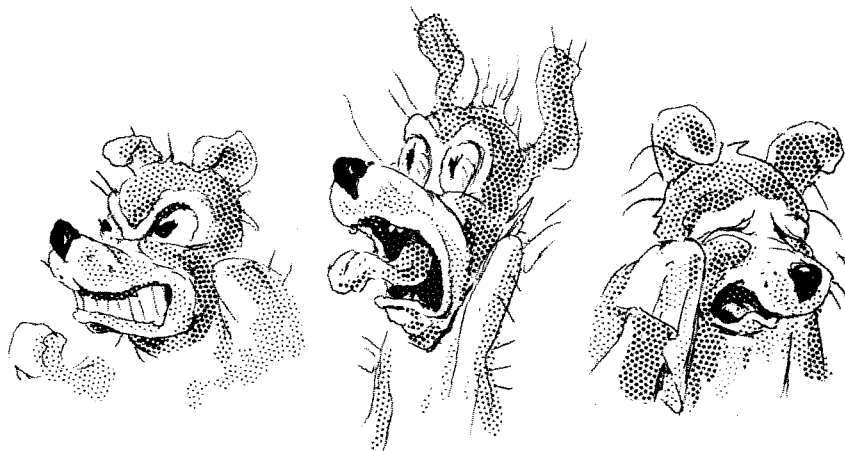
ONE CAN ONLY APPLAUD HIMMELFARB'S broader agenda. She demonstrates that the Enlightenment is much more than the caricatures of it so often purveyed by its presumably more enlightened critics. Nonetheless, she also leaves many important questions unexplained or at least insufficiently answered. She never makes clear, to mention a primary failing, what she takes "Enlightenment" to be. Likewise, she never makes clear the connection between her "forerunners" (Hobbes and Locke) and the British Enlightenment proper. She concedes at the end that the British moral philosophers are shallower than Hobbes and Locke as philosophers, but, truth be told, her book does not plumb even the shallower depths of these thinkers. As she says, it is purely a study of intellectual history, but in order to commend an intellectual orientation it requires more philosophic analysis than she provides.

Finally, a brief word on Himmelfarb's narrower, more political agenda. In her Epilogue she considers the legacy of the three Enlightenments today. She finds that the Americans continue to cherish theirs, but that the British and the French no longer love theirs. She concludes, however, that the British Enlightenment "ironic[ally]... has more resonance in the United States than in Britain." America has, "in effect, superimposed" the British Enlightenment on its own "politics of liberty." The result is an amalgam that constitutes the current political culture of the U.S.—capitalistic and moralistic, individualistic and social, rational and religious. Almost her last words in the book are "compassionate conservatism." George W. Bush's political moment is thus, at the end of the day, the culmination of the best of the British and the American Enlightenments. An interesting claim, but one needing a bit more development than it receives in this elegant little book.

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REDISCOVERING THE SELF

The Vehement Passions, by Philip Fisher.
Princeton University Press, 304 pages, \$35.00 (cloth), \$18.95 (paper)



IN THE OPENING PAGES OF *THE VEHEMENT Passions*, Philip Fisher lauds “the passions, as one of the longest uninterrupted, most intricate and necessary descriptive problems in the intellectual life of Western culture.” He laments that our modern understanding of the passions has sustained “waves of damage both from absent words and from the bad surplus of overlapping, once technical, but now informal vocabulary.” His purpose is apparently to cleanse and reinvigorate our vocabulary, which requires first a wide historical sweep—from Homer to Albert Hirschman, from Stoicism to rational choice and game theory. In the course of this, he uncovers the main causes that have impoverished our way of thinking and talking about the passions—Stoicism, Christianity, and the “new economic description of man” of the 17th century.

That Fisher, editor of a well-known volume of new historicist essays, *The New American Studies* (1992), should approach his subject historically is hardly surprising. But his main point is decidedly ahistorical: “the stubborn, consecutive, rich thinking about the passions is one of the best arguments that we have for cultural memory, for a sustained core account of human nature in spite of the constructions of culture, power, and historical moment.” Indeed, as he will say most succinctly in his conclusion, “the passions provide our best, most immediate template for our idea of ‘having an experience’ and lead beyond that to the meaning of experience within a precisely articulated landscape of time.” For all the influence of history, the passions resist the constructions we wish to impose on them, and in our experience of and reflection on them, we can acquire self-knowledge.

Focusing on the “vehement” passions—the

passions that put us “out of the mind” (*vehemente*)—as the vehicle of self-knowledge, Fisher singles out fear, grief, and especially anger. To begin with, he seeks to make the case for their significance against those Stoics, ancient and modern, who see them as aberrant, asocial, and radically opposed to a “reasoned and morally responsible picture of the will.” The passions, he argues, are the “least culturally constructed materials” we have. They have been the object of systematic thought throughout our intellectual history, provide deep access to human and animal psychology, and are key in the greatest literature, even “legislat[ing] what we mean by genre and by form in many of the most profound and culturally important works.”

Fisher distinguishes the passions from moods, emotions, feelings, affections, and sentiments, arguing that these various terms “are not alternative ways of talking about the same matters but language used in the service of quite distinct politics of the inner life.” In this regard, the vehement passions stand in a dynamic relation with one another: anger turns into grief, for example, grief into the desire for vengeance. They are also “at the farthest remove from irony,” and, in Stanley Cavell’s words, they repudiate “the hold of the ordinary.” Most importantly, by reinstalling an “absolute priority of self,” these passions are “monarchical states of being”; they are so removed from the civility and tolerance of others that belong to everyday life that they are “located in the space that a civilization leaves open between its concept of insanity and its concept of irony.” In sum, the vehement passions are distinguished by their “thoroughness”—they drive out all other states of being so that the self is wholly undivided—and their precondition is the limitation or “humiliation” of the will.

In Fisher’s account, thoroughness and the humiliation of the will are decisive. Great terror or anger engages the mind, body, and soul, bringing them to a unified peak of concentration. This experience can be contrasted with our experience of thought, which requires a forgetting of the body’s distractions. In making this contrast, Fisher further contends that “whenever we locate the core of human worth in thought, a hostility to the body and to sensation follows at once.” This may be true of some of Fisher’s Stoic and Christian antagonists. But it is not true, even by his own account, of a thinker to whom he has frequent recourse—Aristotle. Nevertheless, in different ways, this hostility to the passions marks the Stoic, Christian, and economic or rational doctrines of human nature.

BUT *THE VEHEMENT PASSIONS* IS NOTEWORTHY less for its grand historical claims, which are necessarily schematic, than for its treatment of the passions themselves. In this respect, the work is curious not only for what it discusses but also for what it leaves out. Despite his emphasis on the relation of the passions to self-knowledge, for example, Fisher offers no sustained discussion of the distinctively philosophic passion of wonder, and he only touches upon love or *eros*. The cause of these omissions, it seems, is Fisher’s own template of “vehemence” and its decisive component, the will’s humiliation.

Fisher’s preoccupations are on full display in his account of anger. In a series of chapters whose subjects move from rashness, fear, and the will, to anger, grief, and spiritedness, Fisher begins by claiming, on Aristotle’s authority, that “rashness is the true alternative to the rational



will." Rashness—in the form of indignation's rage at injustice—epitomizes the immediacy of the passions. Unlike the rational will, which requires deliberation and therefore time, the vehement passions are aroused and propel us to act instantly. Consequently, because the passions oppose deliberation and sober judgment, they must be managed or tamed if the process of law is to have its day. On the one hand, then, anger is central to justice; on the other, its "time scheme," which concentrates our action in the "immediate past" and "imminent future," must be overridden.

How this notion thus opposes the view of the passions in Stoicism, Christianity, and modernity in general appears to be connected in a complicated way with Fisher's view that "one of the deepest currents within modernity" is the "spiritualization of fear." The rise of the modern state, and modern science, for example, may have subdued or eliminated the most immediate threats—the "wolf at the door"; but because of our consequent ability to pursue goals of long-term political and economic advantage, not to mention the foundation of the modern state in "mutual fear," we live in a future of anxious uncertainty. Fisher calls this the "economic model of fear," and he connects this model with a more generalized and spiritualized notion of fear in the account of the sublime in Burke and Kant and in the idea of dread in Kierkegaard and of angst in Heidegger. Fear, in other words, is the predominant passion in modernity, and if "fear has been within modernity a fundamental route of access to the most highly spiritualized remnant of inner life," it has also led to the rise of boredom and depression, "states from which the spirit needs to be rescued." Moreover, fear destroys our willingness to act with "reciprocity," only to forge a deeper devotion to such action when our shared fear "reveals the interdependence of wills." These dimensions of fear, in addition to the rationalization of human life that is the natural response to it, seem to be connected with Fisher's emphasis on anger as a route to individual wholeness in a modern world that fragments the self spiritually and politically.

TO TEASE OUT THIS IMPORTANT STRAND of his argument, one must turn to Fisher's discussion of the will, which comes belatedly after his consideration of rashness and fear. For the passions, and particularly anger, are a response to the will's discovering its "limits," namely the "humiliation" that comes with insult, injury, and ultimately, mortality. A consideration of our mortality as the ultimate limit and injury helps to explain Fisher's emphasis on fear, grief, and anger, as well as his treatment of the link between these passions and the concern for justice. In short, "the passions occur around an active will, one that expects to fare well in the world and can, for that very reason, be startled, surprised, and even angered by insults or injuries to [it] and its expectations about the future."

The idea of the will arose in response to the needs of the legal system, which requires a notion of responsibility—of a "deliberate act"—as a ground of punishment, a view that is later spelled out in Christian notions of sin, punishment, conscience, confession, the Last Judgment, Purgatory, and Hell. Even Aristotle, who Fisher concedes did not have a concept of the will in the strict sense, presents the view that human action is deliberate and may be credited or punished when under the command of reason. But the idea of the deliberate act or rational will is put into relief by what Fisher calls an alternative "presocial" account of the will connected with the passions and above all anger. For the passions rebel against the humiliation that attends insults and injuries to ourselves and our loved ones; this rebellion thus issues from a wounded sense of justice that compels the "self" to assert itself because "in anger the self itself and its world are at stake." According to Fisher's argument, then, our concern with justice is firmly rooted in a sense of self and the "essential features and limits of anything" are revealed in that struggle the Greeks called *agon*. Our path to self-knowledge is fundamentally conflictual and is led by the thumotic part of the soul, the seat of anger.

Fisher makes his case against an "economic"

view of man that stresses interests over passions and a Kantian universalism that honors the universal moral law as opposed to individual inclinations. Although he rarely mentions Nietzsche—he is not even listed in the index—it would seem that Fisher's position has a Nietzschean cast, except that in highlighting, even championing, the passion of anger as the assertion of the self against the limits of its will, Fisher captures one strand of Nietzsche's thought torn from its philosophic whole. At the other end of the historical spectrum, Fisher relies heavily on Aristotle's treatment of the passions, but has little recourse to his account of the virtues as the habituation of the passions necessary for our moral perfection and happiness.

Fisher wishes to encourage the discovery of a "personal world" that can claim "to be prior to and, finally, more essential than any shared, common world or 'mere world.'" But his effort to challenge the universalizing, and democratizing, effects of Stoicism, Christianity, and Kantianism causes him to underplay the deeply passionate and agonistic aspects of the modern world and modern thought, and to neglect the importance of a "shared world" and reason in the ancients' education of the passions. Yet Fisher is on to something. The modern world—if not modern thought—seems relatively inarticulate before the passions, despite the fact that modernity has seen the worst outbursts of the most vehement passions, and more superficially, that we are forever encouraged to get in touch with our feelings. It is also not a new concern that the individual risks being submerged in the sea of modern universalism.

But as we ponder our limits as human beings, it is doubtful that the passions that put us "out of the mind" are either an adequate response to our predicament or the deepest source of self-knowledge about it.

Susan D. Collins is assistant professor of political science at the University of Houston and author of the forthcoming book *Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship*.

LATIN AMERICA'S GREATEST STORYTELLER

Borges: A Life, by Edwin Williamson.
Viking, 574 pages, \$34.95



IT IS AN IRONY WORTH RECALLING THAT around the time he was achieving cult status among the hippies of 1960s "swinging" London, Jorge Luis Borges, Latin America's greatest storyteller, was denied the Nobel Prize for Literature for being too conservative. In his own youth, Borges had flirted with socialism and extolled the Russian revolution, but he later repudiated this political past in the face of Juan Domingo Perón's merciless dictatorship. In 1946, when he was working as a lowly assistant in a library on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, Perón's regime "promoted" Borges to inspector of poultry in the public market. When Borges resigned and started giving lectures, Perón put a detective on his tail. (In his characteristic gentlemanly fashion, Borges eventually befriended this informant and learned that he too hated Perón.) No wonder then that Borges once described the politics of his native Argentina as a great toothache that was impossible to ignore.

Borges's political genealogy is as labyrinthine as any of his notoriously difficult stories. In this richly researched biography, Oxford historian Edwin Williamson rightly lays stress on the influence of Borges's parents, not least because he lived with his mother for most of his life, but also because many of his favorite themes derive from them. On his mother's side, Borges was a *criollo*, an Argentine of Spanish descent who could trace his family back for generations. Traditionally, the *criollos* were land-owning families who lived in the Argentine pampas, but Borges's mother's family were also *unitarios*, in favor of a centralized government, and opposed to the *federales*, who sought to keep power away from the urbanized immigrants of Buenos Aires. Borges's early political utterances argue for a radical break with the *federale* status quo:

In this house which is America, my friends, men from various nations of the world have conspired together in order to disappear in a new man, who is not yet embodied in any one of us and whom we shall already call an "Argentine" so as to begin to raise our hopes. This is a confederacy without precedent: a generous adventure by men of different bloodlines whose aim is not to persevere in their lineages but to forget those lineages in the end; these are bloodlines that seek the night.

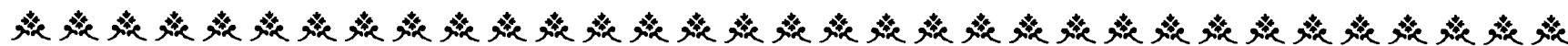
Borges needed a politically unified Argentina in part because he dreamed of being its memorializing poet. He wanted to celebrate Buenos Aires in the same way James Joyce had celebrated Dublin. But whereas faithful Joyceans can still retrace the steps of Stephen Daedalus in today's Dublin, Borges's Buenos Aires is largely a romance of the imagination. Late in life, Borges remembered walking in the city as a child and being told by his father to "take a good look at soldiers, uniforms, barracks, flags, churches, priests, and butcher shops, since all these things were about to disappear."

Borges owed much of his imaginative influence to his father. "If I were asked to name the chief event in my life," he wrote in a 1970 autobiographical essay, "I should say my father's library." It was there that Borges first stumbled upon his life-long loves: the stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, and Richard Burton's *Tales from a Thousand and One Nights*. More than any other library (and Borges never strayed far from them in his life), this seems to have been the one that inspired Borges's famous story "The Library of Babel," in which a bookish narrator charts an infinitely vast library that

functions as an extension of his own mind.

A professor and a failed writer, Borges's father was half-English, and he steeped his son in English poetry and Berkeleyan metaphysics at a young age. He was also the source of Borges's worldliness, moving the family to Geneva when Borges was 14 and to Spain when he was 20. In Madrid, the introverted Borges joined an intellectual café-prowling cadre known as the Ultraísts, who espoused the dashing, if somewhat pretentious, aesthetic credo of Ultraísmo. The tenets of Ultraísmo—in poetry at least—favored bold, isolated images, linked together by steams of consciousness as opposed to the strict French symbolism of the previous generation. In the place of conventional swans, lilies, and peacocks, the Ultraísts substituted motorcars, jazz, and sultry women. Borges gently ridiculed the Ultraísts—he even detected a hint of fascism in their program—but his early poems and essays bear some of their influence. To take one example from *Fervor of Buenos Aires*:

If things are void of substance
and if this teeming Buenos Aires
is no more than a dream
made up by souls in a common act of
magic
there is an instant
when its existence is gravely endangered
and that is the shuddering instant of day-
break,
when those who are dreaming the world
are few
and only the ones who have been up all
night retain,
ashen and barely outlined,
the image of the streets
that others will define.



These are the lines of a populist poet in the making. The "teeming streets" and the "common act" are central to Borges's utopian vision of the people erecting a new reality for themselves. But these Whitmanesque excesses are crucially qualified by Borges's conditional "ifs," as if to suggest that existence itself hinges on a dream. Borges's poetry is always intellectual and never quite at home with reality, but unlike much intellectual poetry (Emerson for instance), it treads lightly on the mind. As he developed as a poet, Borges kept his keen sense of images, all the while grounding them in an increasingly wide range of historical contexts. He was as comfortable writing about the ancient Saxons as he was about Austin, Texas.

Borges and his family moved back to Buenos Aires in 1921. The political climate of Argentina in the '20s was inhospitable to a liberal *criollo* like Borges. The reformist President Hipólito Yrigoyen's attempts to redistribute power among the urban classes were continually frustrated, and the *estancieros*, the wealthy landowners intent on keeping the obsolete agricultural economy in place, were for the time succeeding. It was not a particularly hospitable decade for Argentine art either, but Borges ingeniously managed to disseminate a small printing of his poetry by slipping copies of *Fervor of Buenos Aires* into the pockets of the editors of the city's most renowned literary magazine. In time, Borges and his friends founded their own small, but hugely influential reviews, which single-handedly ushered modernism into Latin America. James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, and Virginia Woolf all found their way to the continent by way of Borges, who figured as Latin America's Ezra Pound, translating major works, hailing new discoveries, and taking in protégés like Adolfo Bioy Casares, whom he always treated as equals.

EDWIN WILLIAMSON IS UNFORTUNATELY an underwhelming reader of Borges's fiction. He seems to have taken at face value Borges's dictum that "all literature, in the end, is autobiographical." Williamson searches for clues to the stories' mysteries in Borges's romantic and family life, which is the wrong place to look. Borges's fiction is, if anything, the product of another, more elusive self. As Borges himself suggests in his wonderfully enigmatic essay, "Borges and I," "I shall endure in Borges, not in myself (if, indeed, I am anybody at all), but I recognize myself less in his books than in many others', or in the tedious strumming of a guitar." It is indeed tedious to watch Williamson trace the twists in the stories to Borges's problems with his overbearing mother or to his failure to win the love of a girl (never mind that Borges himself was somewhat suspicious of Freudian theory on aesthetic grounds).

When it comes to Borges's political evolution,

however, Williamson has written the definitive biography. This evolution took a critical turn in 1943 when Juan Perón, with no small help from his incorrigible wife Eva Duarte, rallied the support of the working classes against the landowners. Perón, the minister of labor and welfare, organized the workers into fiercely loyal unions, and fashioned an impregnable cult of personality around himself. For Borges, this was the "coming of the barbarians"—he saw Perón on the same level as Mussolini or Hitler. When the people actually elected Perón in 1946, Borges was completely disillusioned. "Dictatorships breed oppression," he remarked in a speech shortly after resigning from his humble library post, "dictatorships breed servility, dictatorships breed cruelty; more loathsome still is the fact that they breed idiocy." In 1948, when Perón began to manipulate the 1853 Constitution, Borges's mother and sister were imprisoned for protesting, driving Borges further into despair.

Borges was so disgusted with Perón that, for a time, he effectively gave up on the Argentine people. Even when Perón was finally ousted by a military coup in 1955, there was no obvious path for Argentine democracy. Williamson helps us understand the paradox Borges faced:

Borges was becoming conscious of the predicament that would plague him—and indeed it would Argentine politics—for the rest of his life. For how do you create a democracy when the largest sector of the electorate will elect a totalitarian leader who is ideologically hostile to liberal democracy? Must one accept the "will of the people" regardless of principles and values? Borges was being driven to a position whereby he wished to restore democracy but could only trust an unrepresentative elite to bring it about.

The push for an unrepresentative elite to bring reform is a long way from the young Borges who once called for "a generous adventure by men of different bloodlines." Borges's skepticism about Argentina's democratic prospects was further compounded during his first visit to America in 1961. "We South Americans tend to think in terms of convenience," he wrote, "whereas people in the United States approach things ethically. This—amateur Protestant that I am—I admire above all." The Catholic Church in Argentina had backed the military against Perón, but Borges was drawing attention to the fact that democracy in America had been incubated in Protestantism, which instilled an ethical individualism in its citizenry, but which could not easily be replicated in Argentina.

Borges embraced the anti-Peronist regime of General Aramburu more than he should have—it too was responsible for its share of

atrocities. But it is important to remember that during this period Peronism was still alive and well. Perón was always on the verge of returning from exile, and he effectively ruled the country by proxy in the early 1970s. By siding with Aramburu, Borges chose the lesser of two evils. Perón's henchmen, the *Peronistas*, continued to hound him late in life. Luckily for Borges, his mother was endowed with enough patrician *chutzpah* for both of them:

I get any number of personal threats. Even my mother. They rang her up in the small hours—two or three in the morning—and somebody said to her in a very gruff kind of voice, the voice you associate with a *Peronista*, "I've got to kill you and your son." My mother said, "why?" "Because I am a *Peronista*." My mother said, "As far as my son is concerned, he is over seventy and practically blind. But in my case I should advise you to waste no time because I am ninety-five and may die on your hands before you can kill me.

Borges gained the world's attention when he was awarded the Prix Formentor with Samuel Beckett in 1961. That prize, along with the shrewd stewardship of Roger Callois and Norman Thomas di Giovanni, his French editor and first English translator, put him into paperback, and into the hands of literary students around the globe. The Borges the world got to know was by then an unrepentant conservative, but it did not keep him from being one of the last truly universal writers that everyone agreed on—everyone except the Nobel Prize committee. The sages of Stockholm condemned Borges for, among other things, a trip he made to Chile to collect a prize from General August Pinochet, a dictator Borges mistook for a gentleman. Nobel laureates have been guilty of far graver sins (Pablo Neruda, it must be remembered, was an outspoken champion of international Communism), but the political climate of the '60s was such that it did not seem to matter that Borges had been on the right side of the major struggles of the 20th century. Stockholm stopped dangling its carrot, but by then Borges was content to go without it. The late Czesław Miłosz could have been thinking of him when he wrote that

The Nobel Prize is enough for the smaller ones.
It would not commend itself to someone who gave
an incomprehensible gift....

Such an incomprehensible gift was Borges.

Thomas Meaney is a writer living in New York.

CUM DIGNITATE OTIUM

BE GOOD, BE GOOD

by Christopher Flannery



WHEN YOU'RE HANDING OUT ADVICE TO THE HUMAN RACE, you can't be too careful.

Three editors labored mightily, by their own admission, to whittle down the wit and wisdom of Mark Twain into a helpful 207 page handbook; they had a treasure trove to work with, and they were respectful and painstaking in their labors, as they will be the first to tell you. And the product bears them out.

But that does not suffice for confidence. My King James Version of the New Testament—offering its own helpful hints for the damned human race—is only 182 pages. A handful of inspired scribes and epistolarians put their best efforts into the first edition, prayerfully selecting from an apparently unlimited supply of promising raw material. But they ran into centuries of copyright wrangles and endless charges of plagiarism, and their work languished for a millennium and a half, available mainly in a dead-language version. They were marketing the infinite wisdom of the Almighty Himself, and He had name recognition to die for, but the trimmed down sampler was a tough sell.

Finally, a richly-funded crew of skilled translators, abetted by all the media access of an absolute monarch and the monopoly of an established church, ventured to put the book into shape for popular consumption in the English-speaking world, and it can't be denied they did admirable work. But, as I say, that does not suffice in this market niche. To fight off the "censures of illmeaning and discontented persons" and all manner of "calumniations and hard interpretations," their publishers had to roll out threats from the "dread Sovereign" with the first printing. And wars broke out anyway among discontented readers. To this day, the reading public still harbor doubts about parts of the book. It probably wasn't just for show that Jesus spoke in parables. Human beings are a proud race, and don't take kindly to meddlers.

But Salamo, Fischer, and Frank are no mavericks. They make no claims to divine inspiration, and I see no evidence that they got a king or a church involved, but they had backing. If we can believe their testimony, they belong to a Project that is housed among Papers that belong to a Library that is part of a University. That is The Mark Twain

Project "housed within the Mark Twain Papers at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley." The Mark Twain Papers claim to be "the world's largest archive of primary materials" by Mark Twain, and the Mark Twain Project is producing "the first comprehensive edition of all of Mark Twain's writings," thirty-some volumes of which are already in print. And that's not all.

The selections, annotations, design, research, photography, historical scrupulosity, and proof-reading that went into this volume are credited variously to the work of an editorial staff "over several decades"; still other titled editors ("General," "collegial," "project," and "sponsoring" [!]); one named professor and graduate student; "staff photogra-

phers" and their boss; and "many talented colleagues," a few of whom were talented enough to get their names in the book. If the four evangelists had had such an apparatus at the beginning, they might have made a smoother go of it.

WITH ALL THIS HELP, THE EDITORS WERE ABLE TO PROTECT their author considerably from the ravages of the public, and vice versa. They kept innocently out of the book about 997 available Twain words per thousand, and what they let in they apologize for profusely and hide amongst pictures and drawings and other usually inoffensive decorations. Nor do they leave his words, alone and delinquent, to sprawl all over the pages unchaperoned. Fifty-one Twain fragments, excerpts, and selections, ranging from a

*Mark Twain's Helpful Hints
for Good Living:
A Handbook for the Damned
Human Race,*
edited by Lin Salamo,
Victor Fischer,
and Michael B. Frank.
University of California Press,
207 pages, \$19.95



few lines to a few pages, are escorted decorously onto the premises under eight themes made up by the editors to preserve the proprieties: "Everyday Etiquette," "Travel Manners," "Health and Diet," etc. Each of the editors' matronly themes has an entire page devoted to itself in large letters: "THE AMERICAN TABLE," and so on. Of the 51 sanitized bits of Twain, sandwiched as inconspicuously as possible in small print between these title pages, 38 are given "nonauthorial descriptive titles supplied by the editors." You could hardly show more care for his words if Twain were the sacred Word himself. (In fact, I've seen the Word protected from Itself this way in some modern Bible editions, and they are said to be safe even with children.)

As a result of these precautions, some 74 of *Helpful Hints's* 207 pages are innocuously devoted to Introduction, titles, epigraphs, photographs, drawings, notes, works cited, and acknowledgments. Still, this leaves 133 pages for Mark Twain to get into trouble. And as you'd expect, he rarely disappoints, despite the most careful attentions of his editors. Some of his better gags are almost as hoary as scripture, but Salamo and her confreres say they have been reading them to one another in the Library for over 30 years and are still laughing, so maybe it is safe to retail a few of them here.

In a half-page selection from a 1906 speech on American Manners, Twain lets slip the code under which the professoriate has been conducting business since the death of Socrates: "[I]t is noble to teach one's self; but still nobler to teach others—and less trouble." The corollary of this rule, seen universally to be at work not only among academics but wherever journalists or clergy congregate, is emblazoned in large print on one of the editors' specially designed Maxim pages, extracted (as we learn from their erudite notes) from *Pudd'nhead Wilson*: "Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits." On another large font Maxim page is reprinted Twain's Biblically unsettling paean to the southern watermelon, also from *Pudd'nhead Wilson*: "...It was not a Southern watermelon that Eve took: we know it because she repented."

Were Twain with us still, he would be a regular on the cover of *Cigar Aficionado*. On the question of smoking, which has assumed not merely social and ethical but legal, financial, and nearly religious dimensions in our time, Twain seems as reliable as ever: "As an example to others, and not that I care for moderation myself, it has always been my rule never to smoke when asleep, and never to refrain when awake." But Twain was known to tell some stretchers, and here the editors earn their tenure. They let Twain's exaggerations onto their pages, but they occasionally keep him honest in their notes, as here, citing some clarifications from his friend William Dean Howells: "[Twain] always went to bed with a cigar in his mouth, and sometimes, mindful of my fire insurance, I went up and took it away, still burning, after he had fallen asleep...."

EVERY RENEGADE NEEDS AN ORTHODOXY AS A STRAIGHT MAN, so to speak, which is why all renegades are fated to be conservatives in our heterodox times. But Twain lived and wrote at a time when there was a superfluity of orthodoxies—of the old-fashioned kind. As he was growing up, there was hardly a more authoritative American orthodoxy than the moralizings of Ben Franklin as Poor Richard—urging honesty, and a penny saved, and early to bed, and the rest. In one of the longer pieces in this sampler, Twain is allowed a few pages to expose this cherished sage as the man of "vicious disposition" that every red-blooded boy recognizes him to be, "[who] early prostituted his talents to the invention of maxims and aphorisms calculated to inflict suffering upon the rising generation of all subsequent ages.... Nowadays a boy cannot follow out a single natural instinct without tumbling over some of those everlasting aphorisms...." Among other

afflictions, "[i]f he does a virtuous action, he never gets anything for it, because 'Virtue is its own reward.'"

As a kind of antidote to the confining orthodoxies of Poor Richard, Twain elsewhere offers some of his own edifications, calculated to be more satisfying to boys of any generation: "Always obey your parents, when they are present.... Be respectful to your superiors, if you have any.... [B]e very careful about lying; otherwise you are nearly sure to get caught.... An awkward, feeble, leaky lie is a thing which you ought to make it your unceasing study to avoid;... Why, you might as well tell the truth at once and be done with it."

On orthodoxies of attire, another Maxim page entry: "Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence in society."

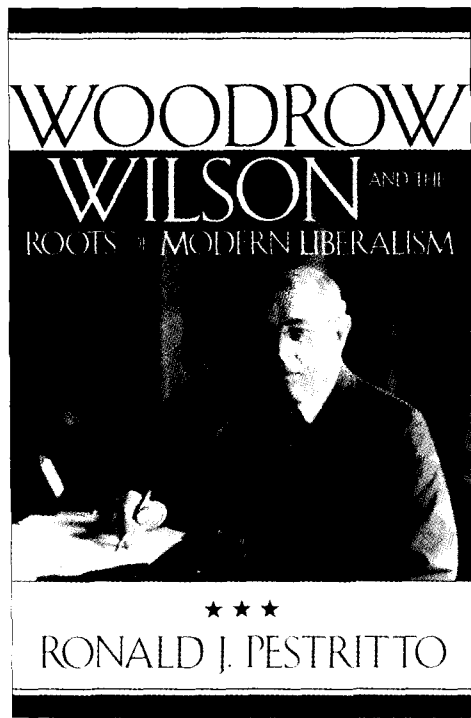
There is more such enlightenment and entertainment, conveniently packaged, in the remaining few pages of the book. And the editors and their Project deserve our gratitude for it. But have they neglected the lessons of history and erred on the side of boldness in letting so much in? The reading public is so fickle that you never know what might set them to censuring and calumniating. Those evangelists edited out a world of potentially controversial material, and King James obscured what remained under the most beautiful English known at the time, and all hell broke loose. What if they had swallowed their pride and just confined production to the Ten Commandments? Well-conducted focus groups could have shown that anything more would probably just confuse the multitudes and cause potential embarrassment to the Almighty. Even the Ten Commandments would predictably stir up some skirmishes: "Which version is authoritative? There are three, you know." "What qualifies for a 'graven image'?" "Can it be right to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children?" "Which day is the Sabbath, anyway?" "How can Heather honor her father and mother if she has two mommies?" Such problems are bound to arise whenever you are dealing with the damned human race. You might possibly cut down the carnage by just printing the Golden Rule as the sum of Divine Wisdom. But you would want to put some large illustrations around it.

AND THIS IS THE POLICY I WOULD SUGGEST TO THE TWAIN editors, for the second printing: You're on the right track. You've kept Twain's most combustible stuff out of harm's way, and what slipped past your staff of thousands won't distract the casual reader from the photographs, which are mostly edifying (you might reconsider the naked one, though it is not without a certain natural dignity). But to avoid all possible misunderstandings, and to safeguard the honor of an author you hold in the highest esteem, though dead: keep a few dozen pages of your best pictures and such, and in the middle, in small italics, possibly rendered into an obscure foreign language or hidden in a footnote, quietly print the first two lines of that short Twain poem containing the sum of all secular wisdom, ancient and modern, respectively:

Be good, be good, be always good,
And now & then be clever....

Do not be moved if your educated readers complain and demand to see more of Twain and less of the editors and their minions. That's just the kind of highbrow editorial policy that got the saintly scribes and the king in hot water. Stick to your principles, and aim for the other readers—it's a more promising market.

Christopher Flannery is senior editor of the Claremont Review of Books.



WOODROW WILSON AND THE ROOTS OF MODERN LIBERALISM By Ronald J. Pestritto

"Ronald Pestritto's book is the deepest and most comprehensive treatment to date of Woodrow Wilson's political thought. Pestritto has produced a masterful study of the origins of Wilson's theoretical views, and he has carefully shown the connections between those views and Wilson's positions on major constitutional and institutional questions. All interested in American political thought will appreciate this important work."

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that our doctor-of-philosophy-president changed how we think about democracy and about America, in ways that ought to be reappraised but have yet to be undone."

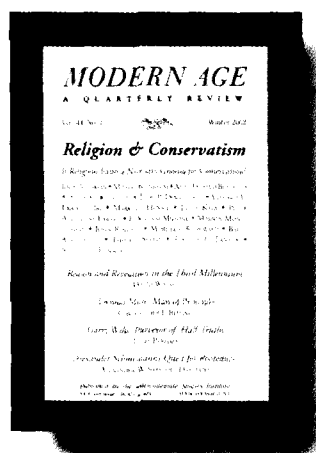
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In this Issue

The Bolshevik taste for the absolute—for Utopia and violence—seems far distant now in the West that gave it birth. But it has reappeared within the Islamic world. The recreation of a universal Caliphate, which ceased to rule all Muslim lands about the year 800, has become a widespread demand of radical Islamic groups from Morocco to Central Asia—a demand as abstract and utopian as Communism itself. In pursuit of such aims a cult of death as pitiless as Stalin's has gained widespread ascendancy over radical Muslims. The war against this style of tyranny demands the same energies, and meets with the same Western equivocations, as the war against Stalinism.

Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr.
"Tyranny and Utopia"

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